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Scholastic Florence

Moral Psychology in the Quattrocento

By

Amos Edelheit



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Cover illustration: Saint Antoninus preaches from a cathedra to an audience of monks and doctors. In the windows behind him to left and right is the text: “Bea(tus) Antoninus archiep(iscop)us Flore(n)tinus ord(in)is p(rae)dicator(um),” from Saint Antoninus, *Summa major*, Venice 1503. Photo: The Warburg Institute.

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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

*To my father, Jaime Edelheit (1934–2013),
in memoriam*



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The book is dedicated to my father who was a part of me for as long as I can remember, and who gave everything that a father could possibly give his son.

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Scholasticism in a Florentine Setting?

The title of this book is intentionally provocative: what has the adjective ‘scholastic’ to do with Florence of the Renaissance?¹ One of the central arguments of this book is that it has everything to do with understanding the intellectual life in fifteenth-century Florence. In what follows my aim will be to throw some new light on the shadowlands of Renaissance thought and the intellectual history of *Quattrocento* Italy by bringing into focus the important contribution made by several relatively unknown scholastic thinkers to the philosophical and theological discourse of the Italian Renaissance.

While one can still agree with Charles Schmitt’s dissatisfaction with the term ‘Renaissance’, pointing out the need for “finer chronological and geographical distinctions”,² the phrase ‘scholastic Florence’ in the title of this book aims at determining a specific set of authors, texts and questions, all connected to Florence, from Antoninus of Florence (1389–1459) and his *Summa theologica* (1440–1454), to the texts of Giovanni Caroli (1428–1503) and Nicolaus de Mirabilibus (d. 1495), which were written during the 1490s.³ But the book is arranged in a thematic rather than in a chronological manner (since it does not make much sense to discuss developments and changes during such a relatively short period of time), focusing on different questions pertaining to moral psychology and to the powers of the soul. Moreover, and in contrast to many standard accounts of ‘Renaissance Aristotelianism’—where the focus is usually on the reception, interpretation and dissemination of the

1 A starting-point for the many conceptual and historiographical issues involved in the term ‘scholastic’, is provided by Riccardo Quinto, *Scholastica. Storia di un concetto* (Padua 2001). For some references to scholarly accounts of the humanists see, e.g. chapter six, n. 1.

2 Charles B. Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance* (Harvard 1983), p. 3.

3 For a historiographical analysis concerning many of the misconceptions and fallacies regarding the concepts ‘Renaissance’, ‘Middle Ages’, ‘early modern’ and other related concepts, see John Monfasani, ‘The Renaissance as the Concluding Phase of the Middle Ages’, in *Bullettino dell’Istituto Storico Italiano Per Il Medio Evo* 108 (2006), pp. 165–185. Most relevant to this book are Monfasani’s words on p. 185: “The almost desperate urge to find ‘the modern us’ in the Renaissance in contradistinction to the backward ‘other’ of the Middle Ages is as unfruitful and silly as the reciprocal tendency to view the Renaissance as hardly more than a glossy veneer masking the continuation of medieval superstitions and deplorable health conditions.”

Aristotelian *corpus* and the Aristotelian tradition by scholastics and humanists, while using a relatively limited definition of the term ‘scholasticism’⁴—this book is focused on a group of scholastic philosophers who were not specifically ‘Aristotelians’, and did not write commentaries (and if they did, as in the case of Lorenzo Pisano for instance, this fact is not of central importance to the argument of this book), or produce translations of the works of Aristotle. These philosophers are treated here as scholastic philosophers of the Renaissance, taking into account the dynamic developments and changes in the scholastic discourse of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, developments which extended far beyond the scope of Aristotelian philosophy. Just as it was important for Schmitt to point out that scholars should discuss ‘Renaissance Aristotelianisms’ in the plural, paying more attention to the complexities and significant differences between different authors,⁵ so it might be just as important to discuss ‘Renaissance scholasticisms’, emphasizing the variety, changes and dynamics between different philosophers of the schools. In other words, we can say that the term ‘Aristotelians’ and the term ‘scholastics’ are not identical and that also in this case we need “finer distinctions”.

A further consequence of this new approach will be the related argument, namely that without a detailed and reliable account of the actual achievements of those professional philosophers and theologians—individuals who were *magistri* at the various *studia* of different religious orders, and members of

4 Schmitt's book, *Aristotle and the Renaissance* is one obvious example for this approach, where such a limited definition of ‘scholasticism’ is provided on pp. 4–5. See also, e.g., Schmitt, *The Aristotelian Tradition and Renaissance Universities* (London 1984); Charles H. Lohr, ‘Renaissance Latin Translations of the Greek Commentaries on Aristotle’, in Jill Kraye and M. W. F. Stone (eds.), *Humanism and Early Modern Philosophy* (London 2000), pp. 24–40; Monfasani, ‘The Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata* and Aristotle's *De animalibus* in the Renaissance’, in his *Greeks and Latins in Renaissance Italy. Studies on Humanism and Philosophy in the 15th Century* (Aldershot 2004), VI. Somewhat more relevant to this book is Kraye's ‘Renaissance Commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*’, in her *Classical Traditions in Renaissance Philosophy* (Aldershot 2002), VI, where there is an account of the scholastic commentary on Aristotle during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. But the general attitude towards scholastic philosophy which is reflected here is rather pejorative; the scholastic commentary tradition is regarded as monolithic and static (pp. 97–98), “for the most part . . . plodding, pedantic and conspicuously lacking in originality” (p. 96), and the only reason for dealing with it is that it “can assess the ways in which the teaching of moral philosophy changed during the Renaissance” (p. 96). A completely different attitude towards scholastic philosophy is used in this book, which is not focused on scholastic commentaries on Aristotle but rather on several scholastic philosophers of the Renaissance in their own right, paying attention to contents, theories and concepts beyond formalistic accounts of style and sources.

5 Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance*, pp. 10–33.

other faculties in different universities—our view of this fundamental yet formative period of early modern intellectual history will be unbalanced and far too biased in favour of the study of so-called ‘humanist’ philosophers and thinkers. Moreover, such humanists, who are still regarded by most contemporary scholars as the real ‘heroes’ of the fifteenth century and as being precursors of different aspects of modernity, including the ‘Scientific Revolution’,⁶ cannot be fully understood without paying more attention to their erstwhile friends and rivals, i.e. those scholastic thinkers with whom they had many fruitful conversations, each party providing some essential stimulus to the other. I would further contend that the habitual and all-too-stringent anti-scholastic rhetoric used by some humanists from the days of Petrarca onwards has been far too influential among modern scholars of the Renaissance, the outcome being that several scholastic thinkers who can be shown to have played an essential role in the intellectual life of the late fifteenth-century Renaissance are ignored.⁷

6 This point is most evident in the works of the two greatest historians of Renaissance thought in the twentieth century, Eugenio Garin and Paul Oskar Kristeller. While Garin emphasized the importance and novelty of the humanists, thus contrasting them with the scholastics, e.g., in his *Medioevo e Rinascimento* (Bari 1954; reprinted Bari 1973), pp. 38–39, Kristeller tried to exclude the humanists from most of the philosophical disciplines, which he identified with the scholastics; see, e.g., his ‘Florentine Platonism and its Relations with Humanism and Scholasticism’, in *Church History* 8 (1939), pp. 201–211, reprinted in his *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* III (Rome 1993), pp. 39–48; see especially p. 40, and his *Renaissance Thought and its Sources*, ed. Michael Mooney (New York 1979), p. 23. Although Kristeller stressed the importance of detailed studies of fifteenth-century “religious literature”, e.g., in his ‘Lay Religious Tradition and Florentine Platonism’, in *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* (Rome 1969), pp. 99–122, see p. 121, he dedicated most of his studies to Ficino and Renaissance Platonism, and to the humanists. His accounts of fifteenth-century scholasticism are usually very general, and much dependent upon the conceptual paradigm of Gilson, e.g., his ‘Thomism and the Italian Thought of the Renaissance’, in *Medieval Aspects of Renaissance Learning*, ed. and transl. Edward P. Mahoney (Durham, North Carolina 1974), pp. 29–91. For the *lacuna* in modern scholarship regarding fifteenth-century scholastic thinking see, e.g., the remarks on pp. 47–48, 52–53, 55–57. For a critique of this conceptual paradigm, mainly with regard to the ‘intellectualists-voluntarists controversy’, see Chapter Five, n. 13 and context below. For Kristeller’s important discussion of Vincenzo Bandello see Chapter Five nn. 31–32 and context below.

7 One among many examples for the use of the term ‘scholastic’ as a pejorative term in recent scholarship of Renaissance intellectual history will be sufficient at this point: see Jan Papy, ‘Creating an ‘Italian’ Friendship: from Petrarch’s Ideal Literary Critic ‘Socrates’ to the Historical Reader Ludovicus Sanctus of Beringen’, in Karl A. E. Enenkel and Jan Papy (eds.), *Petrarch and His Readers in the Renaissance* (Leiden 2006), pp. 13–30; see especially pp. 15 and 26. On this see my review in *Scripta Classica Israelica* XXIX (2010), pp. 144–148. But this attitude was inherited from the previous generation of Renaissance scholars, and even in the

It is among the aims and objectives of the present study to emphasize this significant *lacuna* in modern scholarship and to point out some possible ways in which we can improve our appreciation of a period which for far too long has been subject to a host of scholarly commonplaces and presuppositions.⁸

The approach in this book is to some extent built upon a number of case-studies which have appeared over the last ten to fifteen years, and which have focused upon theories of moral psychology in the late medieval (mainly the fourteenth century) and the early modern periods. These studies have mapped the developments, changes, and tensions in scholastic philosophy as well as the achievements of individual thinkers. This has been largely accomplished by means of fresh analyses of texts, some of which have only recently been discovered and edited and are now mostly reappraised and properly contextualized. Moreover, the “Gilsonian paradigm”, to use Russell Friedman’s expression, assuming the superiority of Thomas Aquinas and thirteenth-century philosophy over fourteenth-century and later scholastic thinkers, had to be questioned in the light of these recent findings in fourteenth-century scholastic discourse.⁹ Building on my earlier research in late medieval philosophy, I now propose to

scholarly most significant work for this book, Armando F. Verde’s *Lo studio fiorentino 1473–1503: Ricerche e documenti*. vol. IV: *La vita universitaria*, 3 vols. (Florence 1985), one can find, in vol. 2, p. 985, in the midst of an excellent account of Galgano da Siena, that “La *Quaestio de genere soni* [a work by Galgano], su cui E. Garin attirò l’attenzione nel 1961 . . . anche se tratta un argomento particolare e di squisita marca scolastica, presenta caratteristiche proprie, ugualmente degne di nota.” In contrast, three examples of excellent studies of scholastic thinkers of the Renaissance by John Monfasani should be mentioned here: ‘Giovanni Gatti of Messina: A Profile and an Unedited Text’, in *Greeks and Latins in Renaissance Italy*, VII; ‘A Theologian at the Roman Curia in the Mid-Quattrocento. A Bio-Bibliographical Study of Niccolò Palmieri, O.S.A.’, in *Analecta Augustiniana* 54 (1991), pp. 321–381; *Fernando of Cordova: A Biographical and Intellectual Profile* (Philadelphia 1992).

- 8 For a recent scholarly debate between Guy Guldentops and Eckhard Kessler over a book on the importance of humanist moral philosophy by Sabrina Ebbersmeyer, where issues concerning scholastic philosophy vs. humanist speculations (once again, we find here the ‘old’ dichotomies such as the scholastics against the humanists, the Middle-Ages against the Renaissance, tradition against novelty, etc.) are discussed, and where references to much of the relevant scholarly literature is made, see Guy Guldentops, ‘Kritische Studie. Die frühhumanistische Moralphilosophie: Anfang der Moderne?’, in *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 77/2 (2010), pp. 391–413; Eckhard Kessler, ‘Ethik im Mittelalter und im frühen Humanismus. Kritische Studie über eine ‘Kritische Studie’’, in *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 78/2 (2011), pp. 481–505.
- 9 See Russell L. Friedman, *Medieval Trinitarian Thought from Aquinas to Ockham* (Cambridge 2010), pp. 133–170. The expression “Gilsonian paradigm” is found on p. 135. See also Chapter Five, n. 13 and context below.

argue that the general role of the scholastic philosophers in the Renaissance is crucial to any pertinent understanding of the intellectual transition from the 'Middle Ages' to 'early modernity'.¹⁰

The term 'moral psychology' reflects the early modern and pre-romantic perspective of the powers or faculties in the human soul (such as intellect and will, conscience and *synderesis*, memory, reason, cognition and love) which are not reduced to mere emotions or affections bearing subjective and irrational flavours, but rather are discussed as objective powers in the framework of a wider and a more flexible metaphysical conception of the rational soul and of human rationality in general. The working assumption behind many of these discussions is that a better understanding of those powers and the way they function should help the individual to become morally good by making better use of these potentialities.

The historical scene portrayed in this book is that of Florence, mainly in the second half of the fifteenth century. The book is divided thematically into two parts: the first includes three chapters where the focus is mainly on conscience, evil and penitence; the second includes five chapters where the focus is mainly on intellect, will, freedom and love. Each of these eight chapters is thus focused on different concepts and theories pertaining to moral psychology, showing the complex relations between scholastic and humanist thinkers who stand between notions inherited from antiquity, and modernity in a Renaissance setting. One of the objectives in all the chapters is to reconstruct a scholastic discourse that was distinctive to Florence.

Early versions of some of the chapters have appeared in different periodicals, but in this book they have been rewritten and clarified in order to reflect a new and coherent mode of thinking which aims at going beyond categories

10 An inclusive approach in Renaissance philosophy is reflected in the title of a volume containing studies by different scholars, edited and partially written by Cesare Vasoli: *Le filosofie del Rinascimento* (Milan 2002). The use of the plural 'philosophies' acknowledges the existence of different philosophical discourses during this period, including the scholastic philosophies of the Renaissance. One of Vasoli's own contributions in that volume, entitled 'La tradizione scolastica e le novità filosofiche umanistiche del tardo Trecento e del Quattrocento' (on pp. 113–132) is a perfect example of this. The studies by Guido Alliney (see Chapter Two, n. 51 below), focusing on issues pertaining to moral psychology among the followers of Scotus in the first decades of the fourteenth century in Paris and Oxford, are particularly important for the analyses and reconstructions of fifteenth-century debates discussed in the following chapters. For one example of an over-view regarding the importance of the Scotist tradition see Maarten J. F. M. Hoenen, 'Scotus and Scotist School. The Tradition of Scotist Thought in the Medieval and Early Modern Period', in E. P. Bos (ed.), *John Duns Scotus. Renewal of Philosophy* (Amsterdam 1988), pp. 197–210.

such as 'humanist' and 'humanism', or 'scholastic' and 'scholasticism'. It is my heartfelt contention that these terms, in so far as they have any utility in historical discourse, should be regarded as terms in transition, and should be assigned a different meaning which should be more precisely explained and contextualized in specific individual cases before any attempt at generalization could be made.

Chapter One focuses on the concepts of conscience, science and predestination which are at the centre of two treatises written by Nicolaus de Mirabilibus (whose account of evil is discussed in Chapter Two), a Thomist thinker in the late fifteenth century whose texts are very rarely read and discussed by modern scholars. To my knowledge, this chapter presents the first detailed modern scholarly account of them and offers a contextualization in terms of Renaissance scholastic thought. In Nicolaus' discussion of conscience we find e.g., that learning philosophy and other human sciences assists us in becoming morally good, and that through the proper use of conscience, which has the power of reaching the right conclusion in a given circumstance and with regard to the right action, we really act in accordance with moral probity. This is how science (*scientia*) and conscience (*conscientia*) are related.

The concept of evil stands at the centre of the second chapter, where we find a detailed account of a typical Renaissance symposium which took place on two different occasions in Florence in June 1489. Two prominent scholastic thinkers, the 'Scotist' Giorgio Benigno Salviati and the 'Thomist' Nicolaus de Mirabilibus were having a public debate on the question of evil and its nature in relation to the goodness of God, to the powers of human reason, and to the status of human will both in the ethical and the theological spheres. The fact that during this debate Salviati and de Mirabilibus were surrounded by some of the most prominent figures of the day (humanists and humanist-oriented thinkers as well as scholastic philosophers) makes this event a real opportunity for examining a unique Florentine milieu. This chapter reveals some important shifts in the understanding of the notion of evil in a period which is essential to our later understanding of that concept in the early modern era from Cajetan to Suárez and on to Leibniz.

Chapter Three, by way of comparing two different commentaries on the first Penitential Psalm (Psalm 6) written by two Renaissance thinkers, the Dominican Giovanni Caroli, and a famous Renaissance philosopher, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, shows that both interpretations and approaches—reflecting two intellectual traditions—can nevertheless be related to what is generally identified with modern scholarship and modern subjectivity. While Pico is using a philological and historical approach, Caroli focuses on the psychological mechanism of the voluntary act of penitence. I should add that this is, as far

as I know, the first modern scholarly account of Caroli's commentary, which has survived in a single autograph manuscript.

Turning to the second part of the book, Chapter Four acts as a bridge between the two parts, suggesting a connection between 'conscience' on the one hand and 'cognition' and 'will' on the other. In fact, according to the interpretation presented in this chapter, 'conscience' is a kind of a combination of cognition or intellect and will, and so, it can be regarded as Antoninus' 'solution' to the tension or conflict between the intellect and the will in the human soul. These and other essential concepts in moral psychology discussed here are found mainly in the first and fourth parts of Antoninus' *Summa theologica*. Antoninus, who was the archbishop of Florence, was also a very charismatic and influential figure in the social, political, economic, religious, and intellectual life of the Florentine republic; his reputation and legacy as a leading moral thinker was already secure in his lifetime and continued through the next two centuries, thanks to the many printed editions of his *Summa theologica* which are to be found in libraries all over Europe. This chapter provides some of the reasons for Antoninus' popularity, shows some evidence for his influence on Marsilio Ficino and discusses his unique 'scholastic' style which aims at breaking the traditional distinction between 'theoretical' and 'practical'.

Chapter Five introduces the reader to an important debate concerning the intellect and the will between the Dominican Vincenzo Bandello of Castelnuovo and the great Platonic and Neoplatonic philosopher, commentator, and translator, Marsilio Ficino. It seems that a private and friendly debate which took place in Careggi near Florence in 1474 between Ficino and Lorenzo de' Medici concerning the question of what is the most appropriate power in the human soul for the acquisition of happiness, the intellect or the will, was the reason for two written accounts on this subject: a poem by Lorenzo, and a letter by Ficino. These texts, which gained some popularity, provoked yet a third account of the same issue: that of Vincenzo Bandello, and this text is at the centre of the chapter which presents, for the first time, a detailed account and analysis of Vincenzo's arguments and critique of Ficino's letter. While Ficino regarded the will as the most important power, Vincenzo is found championing the intellect. The dialectic between these two thinkers reflects the similarities and differences between the two main intellectual traditions in the Renaissance: the scholastic and the humanist.

Chapter Six introduces a theory of will, human dignity and freedom according to the Franciscan philosopher and theologian Giorgio Benigno Salviati (whose account of evil was discussed in Chapter Two). Salviati, an incredible individual, so typical of the Renaissance, was part of cardinal Bessarion's circle in Rome before moving to Florence and playing a central role in the academic

and humanist circles of Medicean Florence. This chapter focuses on issues pertaining to moral psychology, but this time from a more specific angle: that of the Scotist school of thought, one of the most influential intellectual movements in early modern Europe. At the centre of the discussion here is a detailed account of an early dialogue by Salviati on the importance of the will in the human soul, and thus the human will, human dignity, and freedom are among the main notions presented, discussed, analysed, and contextualized in the chapter. The dramatic dynamic of Salviati's dialogue shows his awareness of the fact that he is presenting a theory of the will which is quite new and different from what can be found in Aristotle, Augustine, and Thomas Aquinas.

Chapter Seven tackles the intellect/will dichotomy from yet another perspective: that of self-reflexivity. Here, we meet Alamanno Donati, a minor figure in the Florentine humanist circles of the last decades of the fifteenth century. The focus in this chapter is on Donati's 'On the Excellence of Intellect and Will' (*De intellectus voluntatisque excellentia*) which was most probably written between 1482 and 1487. This short treatise provides further evidence for the connection between humanist and scholastic thinkers in Renaissance Florence and their common interest in determining philosophical and theological questions which were part of a shared medieval heritage. Donati's importance lies in the fact that he somehow bridged the gap between a 'humanist' thinker like Ficino and some contemporary 'scholastic' thinkers like Vincenzo Bandello and Giorgio Benigno Salviati. This chapter shows how, according to Donati, self-reflexivity becomes both the condition through which man can make use of his best powers—the intellect and the will—and the instrument through which man becomes closer to God; thus, it is essential to theology and ethics.

Chapter Eight immerses us in a detailed account of the concept of love (and the different theories concerning love), one of the most famous and influential themes in Renaissance philosophy and literature. Here we meet Lorenzo Pisano, a charismatic figure in the intellectual and academic life of Florence during the 1450s and 1460s, who gathered around him the best of the Florentine youth. Pisano was one of the scholastic mentors of Marsilio Ficino, who praises Pisano's long commentary on the *Song of Songs* in a letter to Cosimo de' Medici. This chapter presents a close account of Pisano's dialogue on love, still hardly known to scholars today, showing that the notion of love which is most relevant to Pisano is the product of fourteenth and fifteenth centuries debates and discussions of moral psychology, where love is understood either as a virtue, a habit, or an action. This chapter also presents a comparison between Pisano and Ficino, focusing on the latter's famous commentary on Plato's *Symposium*, written both in Latin and Italian around 1469.

Viewed in the round, this book purports to offer a general and radical reconsideration of some essential terms and theories pertaining to moral psychology such as the 'intellect' and 'will', 'conscience', 'love', 'intention' and 'action', 'cognition', 'virtue', 'vice' and 'evil', all of which are studied through the prism of Renaissance philosophy. The book is based on many unknown and unstudied texts, some of which are available only in manuscript form, and it aims to show the dynamic nature of fifteenth-century accounts of the problems of moral psychology by moving the study of Renaissance philosophy beyond accepted categories and limitations of previous interpretations. Scholasticism was alive and well in Renaissance Florence; the present book is an attempt to do justice to a tradition of thought that has so often been neglected or omitted due to the prejudices of successive generations of scholars.

A Note on Citations in English Translation

In order to be as consistent as possible, whenever a biblical citation in English is required, I have used the Douay-Rheims version. Unless otherwise stated, all translations from Latin, Greek and Italian sources are my own.

PART 1

On Conscience, Evil and Penitence



A Portrait of a ‘Thomist’ in the Late-Fifteenth Century

1 Some Reflections on Standard Classifications used by Intellectual Historians with regard to the ‘Florentine Renaissance’

For good or ill, there exists an atavistic compulsion among scholars to use an assortment of broad and highly general classifications in intellectual history. Even if such a penchant for taxonomy can and so often does provide scholarship with many useful ways of understanding the thoughts of major and minor thinkers in any specific historical period, it is as well to be aware of the dangers of any undue reliance on generalizations, especially in the history of philosophy. Historians of philosophy tend to look, for example, for the ‘Platonisms’, ‘Aristotelianisms’, ‘Augustinianisms’, ‘Thomisms’, or ‘Scotisms’ in a particular era, thereby determining in advance the importance of a context according to the ideas of these canonical figures and their legacies to the history of Western thought. On many occasions, however, the criteria used for classifying an argument or position as, say, ‘Platonist’ can be distinctively *modern*, thereby revealing the use of assumptions, often tacitly borrowed from some modern works of scholarship, about what ‘Platonism’ is, and how an understanding of the scope of this—essentially modern—collection of ideas would enable us to determine what is and is not ‘genuine’, ‘novel’ and ‘original’ in our chosen period of study. The risk is, to put it in Jaap Mansfeld’s words, of “projecting today’s fashions upon the past.”¹ But while we do have “today’s fashions” in ancient and medieval philosophy, for instance, it is worthwhile asking what are the settled predilections in classifying and taxonomising general positions in Renaissance philosophy. Even taking it for granted that this field of inquiry still lies on the fringes of contemporary philosophy, being rarely taught in departments of philosophy in the English-speaking world today, the above question demands an answer since it is vital that we should attempt to identify the prevalent tendencies of scholars to capture the philosophical importance of the Renaissance period by means of general headings and antecedent allegiances.

¹ Jaap Mansfeld, ‘Sources’, in A. A. Long (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy* (Cambridge 1999), p. 39, n. 1.

With regard to the study of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, we could maintain that the writings of the so-called ‘humanist thinkers’ have been much more exposed to scholarly scrutiny, and their achievements are generally much more appreciated today, than the writings and achievements of their contemporary so-called ‘scholastic thinkers’. In this sense the strong humanist rhetoric against the scholastic style of philosophising has indeed won the day. But those professional philosophers—usually labelled as ‘scholastics’—surely deserve much more scholarly attention, especially if we remember that many of the texts written by them are still available only in manuscript form or in uncritical editions, and as a result have been hardly read and discussed in detail by modern scholars. In other words, these texts have seldom been objects of scholarly appraisal. And we are not talking here about some minor thinkers: for many of those professional philosophers played leading roles in the faculties and in the houses of learning (*studia*), and some of them were very influential figures as well as prolific writers. We can mention here, as three out of many examples, the Thomist Dominic of Flanders, the Scotist Giorgio Benigno Salviati, or the Mertonist Bernardo Torni.² My argument is that this historically unjust disregard of the ‘scholastic’ contemporaries is also problematic from the point of view of the humanist thinkers themselves: a true historical picture of the humanists cannot ignore such an important ingredient of their intellectual context—certainly when we know that in many cases there were interesting connections and mutual influences between these two groups of intellectuals.

Postponing, for the moment, the question as to who were the true heroes of the Renaissance, the real hero of this particular chapter is a Dominican friar—a colleague not only of Dominic of Flanders, Giorgio Benigno Salviati, and Bernardo Torni, but also of Marsilio Ficino, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, and Angelo Poliziano—Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, whom we are going to meet and discuss again in Chapter Two.³ In what follows I shall try to provide a more historically nuanced answer to the question of what the appellation ‘Thomist’

2 On Dominic of Flanders see e.g., León Mahieu, *Dominique de Flandre (XV siècle). Sa métaphysique* (Paris 1942); Thomas Kaeppli O.P., *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Medii Aevi*, 4 vols. (Rome 1970–1993; vol. 4 with Emilio Panella O.P.), vol. 1, pp. 315–318; Verde, ‘Domenico di Fiandra: intransigente tomista non gradito nello studio fiorentino’, in *Memorie Domenicane* 7 (1976), pp. 304–321. See also Dominic’s *Quaestiones perutiles in commentaria Divi Thomae Aquinatis super libros Posteriorum Analyticorum Aristotelis* (Venice 1687). On Giorgio Benigno Salviati see Chapters Two and Six in this volume. On Bernardo Torni see e.g., Verde, *Lo studio fiorentino (la vita Universitaria)*, vol. 2, pp. 485–490, 833–835, 937–942. See also Bernardo Torni, *Opuscoli filosofici e medici*, ed. Marina Messina Montelli (Florence 1982).

3 A good account of this intellectual and social network in Florence around 1489 can be found in Kraye, ‘Lorenzo and the Philosophers’, in *Classical Traditions in Renaissance Philosophy*, IV.

means in matters pertaining to moral psychology in the last decades of fifteenth-century Florence.⁴ But let us begin with some biographical facts.

2 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus: Life and Works

It seems that Nicolaus' family immigrated at some point from Italy to Transilvania and became part of a community of Florentine immigrants who were living in Cluj (in Romania today, in Hungary in the fifteenth century). Our sources are very scarce with regard to the early stages of his life and career. After he joined the Dominican Order, Nicolaus probably began his studies at the conventual *studium* in his home city; later on he was attached to the convent of Košice (Cassovia), and was then sent to study at the *studium* of Buda in 1478. Nicolaus then moved to Italy, and continued his studies at the University of Padua, where he received his bachelor (1481) and master (1483) degrees in theology. Next, he served as the regent of the *studia* in Siena (1484) and Rome (1488), and then moved to Florence, to serve as the regent of the *studium* in Santa Maria Novella in 1488 and 1489. Back in Hungary, he served for one year as the regent of the *studium* in Buda (1489), and then was appointed as 'apostolic preacher' at the court of Matthias Corvinus (1490). In 1493 he became the Vicar General of the Hungarian province, and then the Prior of the province. For some time he also served as 'inquisitor of heretical depravity' (*haereticae pravitatis inquisitor*). Nicolaus died some time in the early months of 1495.⁵

Although complaining that "... because of the daily business of teaching theology and the endless troubles of domestic affairs ... there was hardly any

4 In many respects this chapter continues in the direction of Monfasani's study of Giovanni Gatti (c. 1420–1484), 'Giovanni Gatti of Messina: A Profile and an Unedited Text', providing scholarly portraits of fifteenth-century Dominican 'Thomists'. According to Monfasani, Gatti was a non-doctrinaire Thomist who was sympathetic to Scotus, with a strong humanist inclination which brought him to learn Greek and Hebrew and to cite classical literary authors. He was quite critical of pagan philosophers including Plato and Aristotle, and as expected, was very interested in patristic authors. This portrait of Gatti shows the complexities of such Renaissance Dominican 'Thomists', much beyond some common clichés and uncritical images.

5 On Nicolaus de Mirabilibus see Florio Banfi, 'Fr. Niccolò de Mirabili O.P. reggente dello studio di S. Maria Novella di Firenze', in *Memorie Domenicane* 52 (1935), pp. 177–182, 268–275, 305–310, and in *Memorie Domenicane* 55 (1938), pp. 3–12; see also Kaeppli, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Medii Aevi*, vol. 3, pp. 177–179. And see also Chapter Two in this volume.

time left for me to write about such subtle matters”,⁶ Nicolaus did manage to write three short treatises and had plans for yet another one, ‘On True Happiness’, which he probably never wrote.⁷ But it is true that the nature of his three theological works is strongly related to his activities as a preacher and a disputant: they are first and foremost occasional reactions, or else responses, to the contemporary need for theological accounts of some key issues related to moral theology and moral psychology—for instance, the problem of evil and its origins; the question of conscience and its relation to *synderesis* and reason; the relation between theology and philosophy, and the concept of divine predestination and its relation to human freedom. Nicolaus’ first two treatises were written in Florence during his relatively short stay there in the late 1480s. The first, *A Small Book on Conscience*, which was composed in Italian, is based on a sermon delivered in 1488 to the Dominican nuns of the convent of San Pier Martire and was written some months later at their request.⁸ The second is Nicolaus’ best known work, his written account of the public debate he had held against the Franciscan Giorgio Benigno Salviati on the origin and nature of evil and its relation to God. This famous debate, as we are going to see in Chapter Two, took place in Florence on two different occasions in June 1489 (with many prominent scholastic and humanist thinkers participating in it), and was thus the reason for Nicolaus’ *A Debate Which Took Place Recently in the House of Lorenzo de’ Medici The Great*, published in Florence a month later, on July 27, 1489.⁹ The third treatise, *On Predestination or On Providence*, is again based on a sermon, this time delivered in 1493 before king Ladislaus II.¹⁰

6 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, *De providentia* (see n. 10), prologue: “...propter quotidianam theologicae lectionis professionem, reique familiaris innumeras poenas... nichil ferme temporis pro scribendis eiusce subtilitatibus mihi relictum est”. This is cited also in Banfi, ‘Fr. Niccolò de Mirabili’, p. 273, n. 4.

7 This work is mentioned by de Mirabilibus in chapter 18 (f. 25) of his *De providentia* (see n. 10) and is discussed in Banfi, ‘Fr. Niccolò de Mirabili’, p. 274 and in n. 4 there.

8 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, *Libello de conscientia*, MS Florence, Magl. XXXIII, 17, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, f. Iv: “E già più mesi fa harei satisfacto al vostro pio et utile desiderio, ma le cottidiane lecioni sono state cagione che io non habbi potuto più presto satisfare alle vostre sante domande.” This is cited also in Banfi, ‘Fr. Niccolò de Mirabili’, p. 180. The manuscript is 22×15 (a page is 21×14), it contains 47 ff. written in clear Italian hand on both sides. Black ink is used for the body of the text, red ink is used for chapter titles, and for emphasizing important names and themes.

9 On this text see Chapter Two, n. 13. For some scholarly accounts of this text and its context see Chapter Two, n. 9.

10 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, *De praedestinatione / De providentia*. I have used a digital copy of the manuscript found in the National Library of Vienna, Cod. Palat. 1566.

But Nicolaus is also known for a letter of recommendation written by Marsilio Ficino on his behalf, addressed to king Matthias Corvinus which sought to secure Nicolaus' future career in Hungary.¹¹ Since Nicolaus did have a successful career in his last years, we may assume that this letter had its intended effects on the king and his court.

Since very little has been written about Nicolaus' first text, *On Conscience*, beyond Armando Verde's short account of it,¹² it might be interesting to have a closer look at this text. Let us begin with a short account of the concept of conscience, following it by a detailed analysis of Nicolaus' text.

3 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus on Conscience

The question of the nature of conscience was an integral part of the scholastic heritage in moral theology and moral psychology, being based on previous speculations in pagan and Christian antiquity, and focusing mainly on patristic theology and on later developments which took place during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and are today known as 'monastic theology'. Scholastic thinkers in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were struggling to determine e.g., whether conscience is a potency, a habit or an act, and what are the relations between conscience and yet another mental component which is associated with it, *synderesis*.¹³ "A kind of a moral sentiment" is probably the most accurate general agreement concerning conscience, beyond which many different theories containing different emphases (and using different images) were presented and discussed in detail by many scholastic

11 Marsilio Ficino, *Opera*, 2 vols. (Basel 1576; repr. Torino 1959, 1962; Paris 2003), vol. 1, p. 902. The letter is dated 6th of September, 1489. Ficino is telling the king that in Nicolaus, Thomas Aquinas has been reborn, and that he is just like a living statue of Thomas: "Vos itaque in Nicolao velut in viva quadam statua Thomam illum colite Aquinatem." And see Sebastiano Gentile, 'Marsilio Ficino e l'Ungheria di Mattia Corvino', in Sante Graciotti and Cesare Vasoli (eds.), *Italia e Ungheria all'epoca dell'umanesimo corviniano* (Florence 1994), pp. 89–110.

12 Verde, *Lo studio fiorentino (la vita Universitaria)*, vol. 2, pp. 830–831.

13 A good starting point for these scholastic accounts can be found in Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, qq. 16–17. See also Bonaventure, *Commentaria in quatuor libros sententiarum* 2, dist. 39; Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* 1, q. 18; John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* 2, dist. 39; Antoninus of Florence, *Summa theologica*, 4 vols. (Verona 1740; repr. Graz 1959), vol. 1, pp. 177–204. We should remember that detailed discussions of moral psychology by scholastic thinkers continued well into the early modern period; but this is beyond the scope of the present study.

masters, who were joined in the course of the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries by a new group of intellectuals: the humanists.¹⁴ The emergence of a new style of learning based on philology and a developing sense of historical consciousness which aspired to offer a detailed reconstruction of classical Greek and Roman civilizations—while dismissing in many cases some characteristic features of the Scholastic-Aristotelian philosophical discourse—had of course an impact also on issues pertaining to moral psychology. This way of viewing the Renaissance discussion places it in a more rounded and complex context, one in which Nicolaus de Mirabilibus' short account of conscience should be set.

Nicolaus mentions three faculties in our soul which are responsible for the soul's judgments: the first is *synderesis* (Nicolaus is following Augustine and Thomas Aquinas in regarding *synderesis* as a natural inclination of the soul to do good); the second is *ratio superior vel inferior* (a version of Avicenna's distinction between the potential and the active intellect, and the Aristotelian distinction between theoretical and practical thinking); and the third is *conscientia*. He claims that without these three our soul cannot do either good or evil.¹⁵ This means that without these three mental judges there is no morality, no good or evil. Right deliberation produces good actions; wrong deliberation is the cause of evil actions and vices. Thus this process of deliberation via the three judges is crucial.¹⁶ Conscience is the final judgment just before an act; it

14 For some basic references see below Chapter Seven, n. 1. For some accounts of the humanists and issues pertaining to moral theology and moral psychology see e.g., Charles Trinkaus, *In Our Image and Likeness—Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought*, 2 vols. (London 1970).

15 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, *Libello de conscientia*, f. 1v. Nicolaus is following Augustine's definition of *sinderesis* here: "Lumen innatum anime concreatum, quo dirigimur et movemur ad ea facendum, que pertinentur ad vitationem culpe et pene, et ad adeptionem glorie." *Sinderesis* can thus be regarded as the natural light of the soul according to Augustine (f. 2r). Nicolaus moves on to distinguish between speculative and practical intellect: the first is focused on knowing the truth, the second on acting rather than knowing. On f. 2v Nicolaus presents a nice example: "uno medico che non exercitasse l'arte sua del medicare harebbe quasi uno habito speculativo nel intellecto suo secondo Avicenna. Ma dopo che el medico exercita l'arte sua curando et medicando viene ha tenere uno intelletto pratico cerca le cose medicinale. Similmente Idio ab eterno ebbe noticia et intellecto speculativo di tutte le creature . . . che della sua sapientia fussino create; et bona la scientia et intellecto pratico delle cose da llui producte et così uno medesimo intellecto tuo per diversi habiti si può chiamare intelletto pratico et speculativo."

16 *Ibid.*, f. 18r: "L'anima delibera per questi tre iudici, quello che ha fare del sì o del no. Et primo la sinderesi facendo l'officio suo dirà: nessuno male si vuol fare, sempre el bene si vuol acceptare [compare with Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, q. 16, a. 1 (especially the response to the seventh *contra* argument)]. El secondo iudice, cioè la ragione superiore

considers the proposals of superior and inferior reason and decides or concludes which way to go.¹⁷ Error can only occur in the judgment of superior and inferior reason; both *synderesis* and conscience cannot err or sin. *Synderesis* is naturally attracted to the good and rejects evil, while conscience, since it is neither a potency nor an intellectual habit of the soul, is not capable of cognition and judgment, and thus it can have no cognition and notion of sin.¹⁸

If so, how is it that we have expressions like good or bad conscience? This is because of two different meanings of conscience, *communiter* and *proprie*. The first refers to any judgment done by the three judges. The second refers to a common use of the language.¹⁹

dirà: la superbia, vana gloria, invidia, accidia, et gola è male perché Idio l'ha prohibito. Et alle volte per contrario: la ragione superiore corropta et viciata, per qualche habito malo dirà che la luxuria sia buona perché Idio l'ha dotata con una gran delicatione. E similmente la ragione inferiore se gli è sana e non vitiosa, dirà che rubare, bestemiare, mormorare et cetera sia male, perché egli è contra boni costomi. Così facevano alchuni antiqui philosophi che erano senza lege divina . . .”

- 17 *Ibid.*, ff. 18r–18v: “E poi sequita el terzo iudice, cioè la conscientia, la quale facendo l'officio suo proprio determina et fa la conclusion e di quello che truova nella ragione superiore o inferiore. Onde se la ragione dirà la tal cosa é buona, quella altra item é bona, sempre la conscientia conclude dicendo adunque si vuol fare. E quando la ragione dice questo e quello non é buono, sempre la conscientia conclude dicendo adunque non si vuol fare. Onde l'officio della conscientia non é altro che dire si vuol fare o non fare secondo che la ragione superiore o inferiore propone.”

- 18 *Ibid.*, ff. 18v–19r: “Dico adunque che propone parlando della constantia, che lei secondo sé non erra, ma tutto errore che può essere nel iuditio del anima procede dalla ragione superiore o inferiore, et questo si pruova inductive. Così egli é chiaro e manifesto che la sinderesi mai non può errare in questo, non dicendo altro se non sempre el bene si voli fare, nessuno male si vuol accettare. A Dio sempre si vuol obedire, et in questo iuditio universale della sinderesi non può essere errore veruno, perché secondo Aristotele nell'*Ethica* sua el iuditio dell'anima non erra circa le cose commune et universali, se non circa le cose particolare, circa tale, et vale quello et questo bene o male. Simmilmente la conscientia non può errare né peccare, perché la conscientia proprie detta non è una potentia dell'anima, né uno habito intellettivo, come pruova San Thomaso nella prima parte, questio 78, articolo 13, e però non può cognoscere né iudicare se questa o quella cosa é buona o mala. Onde non possendo iudicare del bene o del male non può havere nessuna colpa, né peccato veruno quanto in sé imperò che secondo tutti dottori ogni peccato attuale presuppone la cognoscentia et notitia, et nemo de ignoto licite punire potest. Adunque non possendo errare né la sinderesi, né la conscientia proprie . . . <é> necessario che ogni errore proceda della ragione superiore o inferiore.”

- 19 *Ibid.*, f. 19v: “Per tanto etiam si dice che la conscientia consequentemente erra non perché erra la sinderesi in sé, né la conscientia proprie detta in sé, ma perché el iudicatorio dell'anima erra in quanto la ragione superiore et inferiore erra, et per questo se dice

While explaining the causes for the errors of reason, Nicolaus is following Thomas in arguing that reason and the will do not err with regard to common and universal matters; on the other hand they can err in more than one way with regard to particular matters, especially in the process of drawing conclusions.²⁰ Interestingly, as we shall see in Chapter Four, the great moralist and influential archbishop of Florence in the generation before Nicolaus, the Dominican Antoninus Pierozzi, regarded conscience almost as a *concludens scientia*.²¹ Nicolaus also emphasizes this ‘concluding’ role of conscience. Now, if this act of concluding is regarded as beyond the power of both reason and will, then we can say that conscience might have a key role in sorting out the complex relations and much-debated contrasts between the intellect and the will.²²

Moving on to discuss Aristotle’s criticism in the *Ethics* of the so-called Socratic paradox, Nicolaus claims that experience shows us that even learned men can err, but they do err with regard to particular matters; the example presented by Nicolaus shows his powers of analysis and his understanding of moral psychology:

appresso al commune parlare: ‘Piero ha una larga et erronea conscientia’; ‘Paulo ha, verbi gratia, una scropulosa et stretta et periculosa conscientia’; in quanto la ragione erra più et meno, et non perché errassi la conscientia proprie detta.”

20 *Ibid.*: “La ragione e la volontà non errano nelle cose commune et universale, non dimeno possono errare in più modi cerca le cose particolare et maxime nel fare la conclusione.”

21 Antoninus of Florence, *Summa theologia*, vol. 1, p. 179: “Habet autem ortum conscientia ex naturali iudicio rationis, quod dicitur lex intellectus, et ab eo est deducta et derivata ut quaedam conclusio, v.g. sit in animo vel in mente hominis quasi quidam syllogismus, cujus majorem praemittit synderesis dicens, omne malum esse vitandum; minorem vero hujus syllogismi assumit ratio superior dicens, adulterium esse malum, quia prohibitum est a Deo; ratio vero inferior dicit, adulterium esse malum, quia vel est injustum, vel quia est inhonestum; conscientia vero infert conclusionem dicens et concludens ex supradictis: ergo adulterium est vitandum. Propterea dicitur conscientia quasi concludens scientia, eo quod conscientia ratione supradictorum, scilicet synderesis, rationis superioris, et rationis inferioris conclusionem infert: Thomas in 2. Sententiarum, Dist. 24.” Compare with Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, q. 17, a. 2 (*responsum*). This citation is discussed in Chapter Four, n. 45.

22 One example of such a debate which took place in Florence in the 1470s is discussed in Paul Oskar Kristeller, ‘A Thomist Critique of Marsilio Ficino’s Theory of Will and Intellect’, in *Harry Austryn Wolfson Jubilee Volume*, English section vol. II (Jerusalem 1965), pp. 463–494. See Chapter Five for a detailed account of this debate.

For example reason says: 'no act of fornication is legitimate'. On the other hand it says: 'every act of fornication is enjoyable'. In those common and universal notions reason judges without error. Then, coming down to more particular matters, reason will say: 'going to this or that woman is fornication'; and even then it does not err in doing and electing the conclusion when reason is constant and is not defeated by some sensual passion, but rather it will choose the right and opposite conclusion, saying: 'one should not go to this person, it is not legitimate or accepted'. But when, on the contrary, reason is weaker than sensuality, then it allows itself to be defeated (*si lascia vincere*) . . . and defeated by sense it will say: 'let us go then to that person'. Reason now will follow the conclusions derived from that true notion: 'every fornication is enjoyable; every enjoyable matter is good; and thus going to that woman is good in so far as it is enjoyable'.²³

The essential phrase here is *si lascia vincere*. Deceived by sensuality or by a tempting demon, reason allows itself to be defeated. Can conscience save the day?

Nicolaus gives us here his own account of the relations between pagan and Christian teachings, Classical civilization and Christianity, and thus plays his own role in those very common Renaissance debates.²⁴ What we have here is a very typical example of Nicolaus' method: on the one hand he cites and follows Paul's overall critique of the so-called wisdom of ancient pagan philosophers; while on the other hand he immediately remarks that one could argue that anyone who has a notion of God and of divine matters has wisdom and should be considered wise. The names mentioned here are Trismegistus, Plato,

23 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, *Libello de conscientia*, ff. 20r–20v: "Verbi gratia la ragione dica: 'nessuna fornicatione è licita', dell'altro canto dirà: 'ogni fornicatione è delectevole'; et in queste sententie commune et universale le ragione ha havuto iuditio et non erra; poi descendendo alle cose più particolare dirà: 'andare a questa o quella donna è fornicatione'; e anche non erra, ma nel fare et elegere la conclusione quando che la ragione è constante et non sia vincta da qualche passione sensuale, elegerà una vera negativa conclusione dicendo: 'adunque non si vole andare a questa persona, non essendo licito né conveniente'. Et per contrario quando la ragione è più debile che sia la sensualità, allora si lascia vincere . . . e così vincta dello senso dirà: 'adunque andiamo a questa persona'. Allora la ragione sequitarà quella vera sententia, dove diceva: 'ogni fornicatione è delectevole; ogni cosa delectevole è buona; adunque andare a questa donna è buono in quanto è delectevole.'"

24 *Ibid.*, ff. 6v–7r.

Aristotle, Alexander, Simplicius, Avicenna, Avempace, Terence, Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Cicero, who were—according to Nicolaus—contrary to Paul’s opinion, wise and not stupid. Moreover, Nicolaus continues, it is unlikely that only Christians were wise, since the Christian faith is founded upon the Old Testament which was first revealed to the Jews, and so the Jews, too, cannot be excluded from equally having a share even in that wisdom which is beyond that of the ancient pagan philosophers. In his response to these observations Nicolaus presents three distinctions: first, between a natural notion of God (a notion through the effects of creation where only one divine quality is known: the oneness and unity of God) which is inferior to a revealed notion of God (a more advanced notion where the three persons in God are known).²⁵ The example for the first notion is Aristotle;²⁶ the second distinction is between the worldly wisdom of the philosophers (*sapientia mondana*), and the true and divine wisdom of Christians; the third distinction is between having wisdom, and wanting to live according to wisdom. Nicolaus concludes that in comparison to true, divine, wisdom ancient philosophers have a very little notion of God, and so we are led back to the Pauline theme of the ‘foolishness of the cross’.²⁷

And what about the Jews? The third distinction is relevant in this case since they—by their rejection of Christ—show that they do not want to understand their own Scriptures and they do not want to live in accordance with the wisdom of Scripture. They ascribe enormous cruelty to God, and continue to wait for the Messiah more than 1,400 years, assuming that it is possible for God to desert His servants for so long. In this respect, Nicolaus claims, they are just like those fools who try to investigate the articles of faith by using natural philosophy.²⁸ Some other “philosophers and false Christians” say that they cannot find any natural reason which shows the immortality of the soul or the existence of hell, purgatory, and heaven. This brings Nicolaus to discuss “what is the root of infidelity” (*Quale è la radice della infidelità*). According to Nicolaus the sin of infidelity or disbelief originates from following only the inferior

25 *Ibid.*, ff. 7r–7v.

26 *Ibid.*, f. 7v: “Adunque mediante le creature si può investigare solamente la unità di Dio, come feciono alchuni philosophi, et maxime Aristotile XII Methphisice, dove conclude che essendo uno solo ordine del universo, cioè essendo uno mondo et non più mondi, é necessario sia uno capo, una prima causa, uno solo primo principe da cui depende et procede ogni qualche cosa.”

27 *Ibid.*, f. 9v: “Onde savii et philosophi mondani credevano essere savii, et non dimeno sono diventati stolti.”

28 *Ibid.*, f. 10r.

natural reason.²⁹ The argument here is again that human philosophy and knowledge are not good enough as instruments for investigating and understanding the divine secrets of the Trinity or the articles of faith. But what happens when we start investigating those divine secrets? In this case our object will not be regarded 'science' but rather 'wisdom', claims Nicolaus. And here our theologian chooses to follow Aristotle and all the other leading philosophers in asserting that only wisdom, rather than science, can consider the first, supreme, and divine causes.³⁰ So what is the answer to our question? Philosophers should follow the supreme reason, theology, and true wisdom, and only then will they not err.³¹

Nicolaus presents his Aristotelian-Thomistic approach with a certain Neoplatonic flavour regarding the nature of God and the relation between Him and other beings.³² He emphasizes that the Christian dogmas are beyond nature and reason but not contrary to either nature or reason; and it is here that we find an interesting reference to the Muslims:

... these matters are beyond the natural order but not against nature. And we theologians can easily resolve all the arguments and reasons presented by philosophers, where they argue against the Christian faith, since theology is founded upon the infallible truth of God. But you shall

29 *Ibid.*, f. 10v: "... la radice et fundamento di questi errori et d'ogni incredulità non é altro se non che vanno tutta via sequitando solamente la ragione inferiore e la scientia naturale, la quale philosophia humana, essendo pura scientia et non sapientia, non si può alzare alle cause altissime, eterne et divine."

30 *Ibid.*, f. 11r: "Et pretere se la tua scientia naturale considerasse delle cose divine et secreti celestiali, perderebbe el nome della scientia; non sarebbe più scientia, perché diventarebbe sapientia, perché secondo Aristotele et tutti principali philosophi solamente la sapientia ha questa dignità et questo officio di considerare le prime cause altissime et divine, et non la scientia. Adunque implica contradictione che la tua scientia naturale in quanto scientia possa investigare sacramenti et miracoli della fede Christiana."

31 *Ibid.*: "Onde se costoro se volessino governare secondo la ragione superiore, secondo la theologia et vera sapientia non harebino errore veruno, et se tu non voi venire alla nostra theologia andiamo alla sapientia mondana, cioè alla Methaphisica d'Aristotele, dove si pruova come Idio necessariamente è la prima causa efficiente et finale d'ogni cosa, et è sempre intelligente et vivente nella vita beata et sempiterna, d'ogni compositione alieno, dove non é accidente veruno."

32 *Ibid.*, f. 11v: "Et è senza ogni permixtione delle cose extrane, simpliciter semplice, et è uno acto purissimo senza ogni potentia materiale et passiva, et è essenzialmente uno ente infinito, una potentia activa infinita, una virtù imensa. Solo lui è ente et causa per essentia, tutte l'altre cose sono ente per participatione in quanto ciaschuna cosa partecipa l'essere suo della prima causa ommnipotente et governante tutte le cose."

never find that theology says anything—even in the smallest matter—against reason, as the sect of Muhammad does. It is commanded by the bestial law of this sect that no one should reply to arguments against this law by using reason, but only by using the sword . . .³³

Christianity had developed another attitude towards reason and arguments:

Hence the Christian truth is recognized in that we respond to all the arguments and reply to whatever doubt, and we use many different testimonies of different and most ancient times and persons, from different provinces and nations, of patriarchs, prophets, of pagans and Jews to whom this Christian truth was revealed by God before the arrival of Christ, hundreds and thousands of years before us. And then the Christian faith was announced by the Christian apostles, poor fishermen who converted so many leaders, kings, wise and prudent masters, from paganism to the Christian faith.³⁴

What we seem to have here in Nicolaus' defense of Christianity against the sect of Muhammad is an emphasis on the cultural heritage of Christianity, the fact that Christianity was always engaged in responding to its critics, using reason and arguments (and thus using authors and authorities, using 'culture' as such), and—what is more important—using a variety of testimonies from

33 *Ibid.*, ff. 11v–12r: "... queste cose sono oltre el corso naturale, ma non sono contra la natura; et però noi theologi facilmente possiamo solvere tutti argomenti et tutte le ragioni de philosophi, dove arguiscono contra la fede christiana, perché la theologia è radicata nella verità infallibile di Dio, et però mai non truoverai che la theologia dica una cosa minima che sia contra la ragione, come fa la secta del Machometo, el quale comanda nella sua lege bestiale che nessuno debba rispondere agli argomenti fatti contra la sua lege se non colla spada et non colla ragione..." Concerning the phrase *cose sono oltre el corso naturale*, referring to the fact that Christ commanded people to do impossible things, a proverb circulated in the universities and was ascribed to Averroës, mentioned in John Nevizanus, *Sylva nuptialia* (Lion 1545), p. 66: "Lex Moysi est lex puerorum, lex Christi est lex impossibilium, lex Mahumeti lex porcorum." I would like to thank Dr. Franco Bacchelli for his helpful remarks on this issue.

34 *Ibid.*, ff. 12r–12v: "Onde la verità del christianesimo si cognosce in quanto che noi satisfaciamo ad tutti argomenti et rispondiamo a qualunque dubio, et habiamo diversa et varia testimonianza di varii et antiquissimi tempi et persone, di varii provincie et nationi, di patriarchi, propheti, prophetisse, di pagani et iudei, a' quali fue revelata da Dio inanzi che Cristo venisse, parechi centinaia et migliaia <anni> da noi. Et poi la fede christiana fu publicata per christiani apostoli, poveri pescatori, in quali hanno convertito tanti imperatori, re, et signori savii et prudenti del paganismo alla fede christiana."

different periods and backgrounds, using many different sources for proving its validity and truth, using its history and its tradition. The fact that he is going back to the 'Eusebian project' of *Praeparatio Evangelica*, a cultural project which was restored with great enthusiasm by Marsilio Ficino, who added to it his own Neoplatonic perspective of the *prisca theologia*, puts Nicolaus in a recognizable Renaissance setting.³⁵

After emphasizing again the superiority of theology, which is founded upon divine wisdom, over philosophy, the creation of human intellect,³⁶ Nicolaus goes back to philosophy and science. He asserts that it is not completely forbidden to follow inferior reason and philosophical and natural science, since, according to Aristotle, no virtue should be prohibited if it is used in a proper way and for the good.³⁷ He presents an interesting analogy between those who do not know theology, and those who do not know philosophy:

...just as those are fools who do not have wisdom, so necessarily those who do not know natural philosophy are ignorant; and the one who does not have either the wisdom of theology or the knowledge of philosophy is both a fool and ignorant. As a result it is impossible for such individuals to be good since any goodness originates either from wisdom or from science... goodness cannot originate neither from stupidity nor from ignorance, and so Aristotle justly concludes in the *Ethics*: anyone ignorant is evil.³⁸

Nicolaus is following Aristotle in identifying ignorance with moral misconduct or evil (we should not enter here into the question of Aristotle's attitude to the relation between knowledge and moral virtue, where he rejects the Socratic maxim "virtue is knowledge", but later on he admits that without

35 On this see e.g., D. P. Walker, *The Ancient Theology: Studies in Christian Platonism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (London 1972); Cesare Vasoli, *Quasi sit deus—studi sul Marsilio Ficino* (Lecce 1999).

36 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, *Libello de conscientia*, f. 14v.

37 *Ibid.*: "Et nota che non é proibito assolutamente, cioè in ogni modo, che l'huomo sequesti la ragione inferiore e le scientie philosophice et naturale, perché nessuna virtù in quanto è adoperata in bene, mai non può essere licitamente proibita secondo Aristotele."

38 *Ibid.*, f. 15r: "... come coloro sono stolti i quali non hano la sapientia, così necessariamente sono ignoranti coloro che non hanno la natural philosophia; e chi non ha la sapientia di theologia, né la scientia di philosophia, è stolto et ignorante; et consequentemente è impossibile che sia buono, imperò che ogni bontà, o che procede della sapientia, o scientia... la bontà non possa procedere né della stoltitia, né d'ignorantia; e però meritamente conclude Aristotele nel Ethica: ogni ignorante è malo."

knowledge one cannot be completely good). What we have here is a moral justification for studying philosophy and having knowledge: by not being ignorant we become morally good. This becomes clearer if we remember that reason, including inferior reason, is one of the three mental faculties related to the soul's judgments (see n. 16). And so:

If you thus will use inferior reason and human sciences in order to understand more easily and clarify divine matters, just as St Thomas and the other doctors did, you shall be commendable and most prudent, since inferior reason is of great help to superior reason and theology, as St Paul says in the first Epistle to the Romans . . .³⁹

Thus, learning philosophy and other human sciences assists us in becoming morally good; by the proper use of conscience, which, as we have seen, has the power of reaching the right conclusion in any given circumstance and with regard to the right action, we really act in a proper moral fashion. This is how science (*scientia*) and conscience (*conscientia*) are related. Following Thomas again,⁴⁰ Nicolaus claims that we are under obligation not only to true conscience but also to a wrong conscience. Wrong conscience obliges only accidentally, so far as it seems to the agent as if it is founded upon a divine commandment of God or of the Church, and thus, acting against it will seem like acting against God.⁴¹ And so one should always follow his conscience: in

39 *Ibid.*, ff. 15r–15v: “Adunque se tu adoperassi la ragione inferiore e le scientie humane per potere più facilmente intendere et dichiarare le cose divine, come fa san Thomaso e gli altri doctori, saresti comendabile et prudentissimo imperò che la ragione inferiore da’ grande adiuto alla ragione superiore e theologia, come dice san Paulo, primo ad Romanos: invisibilia delle cose invisibile, eterne et divine più facilmente si conoscano per le cose corporali et visibili, perché quella chosa non può venire all’intellecto, la quale non sia stata primo in qualche senso, Aristotele 3 de anima. E però è utilissima la philosophia naturale purché tu non pongi l’ultimo fine nella ragione inferiore et scientia humana, ma più tosto nella ragione superiore e nella vera sapientia et theologia, la quale sola ti conduce alla vera felicità.”

40 Thomas Aquinas, *De trinitate* q. 17, a. 4.

41 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, *Libello de conscientia*, ff. 38r–38v: “E mentre che tu hai simil conscientia erronea tu se’ obligato a sequitarla, perché facendo contra lei faresti etiam contra Idio come dichiara San Thomaso, de trinitate questione xvii, articolo iiii, dove dice che la conscientia recta obliga in ogni evento cioè in ogni caso e modo, ma la conscientia erronea e scropulosa obliga non per sé, ma per accidens, in quanto a llei pare che sia fondato in qualche comandamento di Dio o della Chiesa, onde facendo contra la tale conscientia parebbe facessi contra Idio e per tanto peccaresti.”

case it is a true conscience good actions will ensue; in case it is a wrong conscience we still must follow it in order to avoid acting against God, thus committing a graver sin. Conscience here is a very powerful inner conviction to do or not to do something, and one should always follow it. But acting out of a bad conscience places us in a dilemma, since in any case we could end up doing something wrong. Are we, after all, so far from humanist and humanist-oriented thinkers like Petrarca, Salutati, Bruni, Valla, Ficino, or Pico? Let us now discuss Nicolaus de Mirabilibus' last work.

4 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus on Predestination

The question regarding divine predestination or providence stands at the centre of de Mirabilibus' last work. Nicolaus opens his discussion with Thomas' definition of God's providence: it is God's principle of transmission through which He leads forth and directs the rational being towards the end which is eternal life.⁴² Providence here seems just like a general framework according to which everything is guided. God, being the first cause, effects general and singular matters (*omnes et singulas res efficit*) only through His intellect,

42 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, *De praedestinatione*, f. 2r: "Predestinationem divus Thomas noster, parte prima, q. 23, articulo 1 [Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1a, q. 23, a. 1] ita diffinit et consentiuntur theologi omnes: predestinatio igitur est ratio eius transmissionis, qua Deus rationalem creaturam evehit et dirigit ad finem vite eterne." It is both interesting and revealing that Nicolaus, writing in the 1490s, is emphasizing in the first chapter that all the theologians agree with Thomas' definition of predestination, while many contemporary philosophers and theologians will still remember the famous debate concerning the issue of future contingents (which is also related to the question of divine predestination), which burst forth in 1465 in the University of Louvain and very soon spread to Rome, Cologne and Paris. On this debate see L. Baudry (ed.), *La querelle des futures contingents* (Louvain 1465–1475). *Texts inédits* (Paris 1950). For Salviati's reaction to this debate see Giorgio Benigno Salviati, *De arcanis Dei. Card. Bessarion eiusque socii anno 1471 disputantes: card. Franciscus de la Rovere OFM Conv, Joannes Gattus OP, Fernandus de Cordoba et Joannes Foxal OFM Conv. Secretarius: Georgius Benignus Salviati OFM Conv.*, ed. Girard J. Etzkorn (Rome 1997). On this important philosophical and theological problem in fourteenth-century Paris see Christopher Schabel's, *Theology at Paris, 1316–1345: Peter Auriol and the Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and the Future Contingents* (Aldershot 2000). See also Schabel's 'Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom: Auriol, Pomponazzi, and Luther on "Scholastic Subtleties"', in Russell L. Friedman and Lauge O. Nielsen (eds.), *The Medieval Heritage in Early Modern Metaphysics and Moral Theory, 1400–1700* (Dordrecht 2003), pp. 165–189.

knowledge and will.⁴³ Thus, this general framework which preexists in God's mind is called providence.⁴⁴ This framework, however, should be distinguished from fate (*fatum*): while everything is subjected to the necessity of fate, only human beings and angels, through the infusion of grace, are subjected to divine providence and cannot be subjected to fate.⁴⁵ In the same way divine providence cannot impose any necessity on singular things,⁴⁶ nor is it threatening the freedom of our will.⁴⁷

While distinguishing the Greek *logos* from the Christian *logos* Nicolaus, once again, appears to be a great champion of human autonomy in moral issues:

... God right from the very outset created man and left him in the hands of his counsels. And again [God will set] before man [matters concerning] life and death, good and evil, just as it pleased Him. From this it seems easy [to assess] how the error of the Stoics should be utterly condemned; since they held that everything originates from some necessity according to some indomitable sequence of causes, which the Greeks call 'destiny'.⁴⁸

It is interesting that Nicolaus' critique here of the Stoic deterministic view presupposes a free human agent. He is emphasizing the fact that divine predestination is relevant to intellectual beings, but it involves no compulsion, since it is basically nothing more than a simple practice: through good deeds which can only originate from good will we are transferred to eternal glory.⁴⁹

43 *Ibid.*

44 *Ibid.*, f. 2v: "Ratio igitur ordinandarum rerum in finem in mente Dei preexistens proprie providentia Dei appellatur."

45 *Ibid.*, f. 3r.

46 *Ibid.*, f. 5v: "... ita fieri non potest ut ullis Dei providentia singulis rebus necessitatem imponat, iam enim nulla causarum secundarum deficere posset."

47 *Ibid.*, f. 6r: "... non potest igitur nostra voluntas etiam sub Dei providentia non esse libera."

48 *Ibid.*, ff. 6r–6v: "... Deus ab initio constituit hominem et reliquit illum in manu consilii sui. Et rursus ante hominem vita et mors, bonum et malum quod placuerit ei dabitur illi. Ex his facile apparet quam sit dampnandus Stoicorum error, quod secundum quemdam intransgressibilem causarum ordinem—quem Greci EIMARMENĒN [εἰμαρμένην] vocabant—omnia credebant ex necessitate quadam provenire." For a sixteenth-century echo of this known theme involving Erasmus, Muret and Lipsius, see Krays, 'The Humanist as Moral Philosopher: Marc-Antoine Muret's 1585 Edition of Seneca', in Jill Krays and Risto Saarinen (eds.), *Moral Philosophy on the Threshold of Modernity* (Dordrecht 2005), pp. 307–330, especially on pp. 326–328.

49 *Ibid.*, f. 6v: "At Dei predestinatio super intellectualem creaturam ita dumtaxat fertur, ut non violentur nec omnino coacti, sed ex bonis operibus ad eternam transmittamur

Predestination from the perspective of an omnipotent God is completely different from the perspective of a created being: God knows everything which—from our point of view—happened in the past or is about to happen in the future through the mirror of His eternity; but there is no necessity imposed on contingent matters, since God knows that our future actions will happen to us not in an absolute fashion, but rather that they will occur out of our choice, not out of a necessary cause.⁵⁰ In the same way the created will should be regarded as a free and contingent cause, and so is the effect of predestinations.⁵¹ These important views reflect Nicolaus' focus on the agent and his anthropological perspective. Following Augustine, he emphasizes that although God created man without man, He is not going to save man without man.⁵² It seems very important for him to keep a degree of internal human autonomy (based on freedom and love) in the general framework of divine predestination.⁵³

An important reference to Peter Auriol's account of the unchanged nature of predestination shows Nicolaus' familiarity with some non-Dominican fourteenth-century discussions of this issue: divine predestination in a perfect sense (*complete*) could be regarded as coming from our own direction.⁵⁴ One notices that only in Auriol do we find the identification of divine

gloriam. Concurrent ergo bona opera, concurrunt bona voluntas ex qua sola bona merita produntur facinora . . ."

- 50 *Ibid.*, f. 7r: "... ita omnipotens Deus omnia et singula, quae nobis vel futura sunt vel praeterita in sue eternitatis speculo presentia inspiciens certissime et infallibiliter cognoscit, ita tamen quod contingentibus illis nulla imponitur necessitas. Cognoscit enim nostra opera futura nobis esse non absolute, sed eventura ex arbitrio non ex causa necessaria."
- 51 *Ibid.*, f. 7v: "... voluntas autem creata est causa libera et contingens, ergo et effectus predestinationibus contingens est . . ."
- 52 *Ibid.*, ff. 8v–9r: "Qui creavit te sine te, non salvabit te sine te."
- 53 *Ibid.*, f. 11r: "Requiritur igitur ut divine illi transmissioni nullo modo resistamus, sed libere et amore transmittamur non coacti, et ideo predestinatio completa ex parte nostra sicut libera est . . ."
- 54 *Ibid.*, f. 11v: "Legi nonnunquam subtilem quemdam doctorem Petrum, ut est, Aureoli qui primo sententiarum scripto, distinctione xl, hanc difficultatem non modicam perpulcre ita dissolvit, ut divine predestinationi, si complete accipiat, causa aliqua etiam ex parte nostra consignari possit." Compare Peter Auriol, *Scriptum super primum sententiarum*, ed. Eligius M. Buytaert (Louvain 1952), dist. XL, q. LXVI (p. 105): "Quod secundum veritatem praedestinatio non est nisi divina volitio consequens praescientiam eius, secundum nostrum modum intelligendi; et ibidem ostenditur ex quo syllogismo talis volitio inferri concipitur a nobis." Another mention of Auriol can be found on f. 12v: "Concludamus igitur cum Aureolo, quem acerrimum argumentatorem recentiores vocant." We have here an important positive assessment of Auriol by some more recent thinkers reported by de Mirabilibus. This is part of the history of the reception and

predestination and divine volition, and that divine predestination is regarded as 'some cause which could be also assigned by us' (*causa aliqua etiam ex parte nostra consignari possit*) according to de Mirabilibus, while Auriol prefers 'a volition such as is conceived as performed by us' (*talis volitio inferri concipitur a nobis*). The essential point in both formulations is that our free choices are authentic under this perfect divine predestination. De Mirabilibus has no problem in mentioning in this context what he regards as the opinion of Plato concerning the need for purifying the mind; and thus, pure divine mind can be approached only by pure human minds, and this is true according to both the Christians and Plato.⁵⁵

Nicolaus mentions the debate concerning unbaptized infants and strongly rejects the Augustinian view of their reprobation.⁵⁶ In the case of adults, on the other hand, free choice is both the foundation of morality and of salvation.⁵⁷ Nicolaus insists that God sees our future deeds not in an absolute and necessary fashion, but rather that He sees us acting freely, and that only this kind of actions (i.e. free and contingent) are really worthy in the eyes of God.⁵⁸ The essential role of a free willing agent in the process of salvation is emphasized time after time in Nicolaus' discussion, since it is impossible for any agent who is acting under compulsion to be saved.⁵⁹

This is also how Nicolaus interprets the biblical verse where Peter is told by Christ that he is going to betray Him three times (Mark 14, 30): Peter sinned freely and there was no necessity in his actions. Even though God could see that Peter was about to sin, Peter was not compelled by this divine

influence of some fourteenth-century scholastic masters in the Renaissance and in the early modern era.

55 *Ibid.*, f. 13r: "Purissimam namque Dei mentem non nisi purissime mentes aspirare possunt, si Christianorum, si denique Platonis sententia vera est."

56 *Ibid.*, f. 14r: "... sic, inquam, nullus peritus theologus dicet infantes dampnatos."

57 *Ibid.*, f. 14v: "... anima tua in manibus tuis est; ante homines item vita et mors, bonum et malum; liberum habes arbitrium, saltem abstine[n]di a malo."

58 *Ibid.*, f. 18r: "Dico tamen cum sacris doctoribus omnibus quod Deus vidit te facturum bona et sancta opera non absolute, non necessario, non denique coactione aliqua, sed vidit te libere operaturum; non igitur ea necessario facis"; ff. 18r–18v: "Dicas ergo cum veritate quod, quemadmodum opera violentur et ex necessitate quadam facta non sunt meritoria, ita fieri non potest ut Dei providentia ad acquirenda merita te cogat."

59 *Ibid.*, f. 18v: "Predestinatio namque passive accepta, quae potius dicitur executio illius divine predestinationis, secundum communem legem saltem ex parte nostra requirit non resistantiam, sed bonum operari volentem, cum nemo invitus salvari possit."

knowledge.⁶⁰ From the perspective of divine predestination Peter's denial of Christ was indeed necessary; but from the perspective of Peter's choice his action was contingent.⁶¹ Nicolaus clarifies that from a logical point of view assuming divine foreknowledge (*prescientia*) does not mean that human actions are compelled and necessary.⁶² In this way there is no contrast between this divine foreknowledge and the agent's free choice.

5 Conclusion

We have now observed some of the scholarly and philosophical nuances which must qualify the use of the appellation 'Thomist' in any case-study of Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, by focusing on two of his works which have been very rarely discussed by modern scholars. In his account of conscience we found an interesting philosophical defense of Christianity as a civilization which cherishes debates and argumentation, in contrast to the Muslims. Following one's own conscience, whether a good or a bad conscience, reflects a powerful inner conviction of the agent which should be always respected in order to avoid graver sin. While the process of deliberation through three mental judges is regarded as crucial in de Mirabilibus' account of conscience, ascertaining freedom of choice becomes an essential component—fundamental to morality and salvation—in his account of predestination, where authentic free choices and the autonomous subjectivity of the agent are not reduced, but rather emphasized, in the framework of divine predestination.

While references to Plato and Aristotle, Simplicius and Cicero, to Augustine, Peter Lombard and mostly to Thomas Aquinas are expected in the case of a Dominican philosopher and theologian, and are indeed found in these two texts of de Mirabilibus, beside the mention of some standard Roman poets such as Virgil, Ovid and Terence, two important references to Peter Auriol's discussion of predestination point to his familiarity with more recent accounts of this subject, as well as to the importance and influence of Auriol on later discussions of predestination.

60 *Ibid.*, f. 20v: "Ex his ad argumentum dico, quod quia Petrus libere peccavit, ideo non fuit necessarium ut peccaret; etiamsi Deus certissime et infallibiliter previderit eum sic peccaturum, non tamen fuit ex hac Dei prescientia coactus, quoniam Dei visio, ut probavimus, neminem penitus cogit."

61 *Ibid.*, f. 21r.

62 *Ibid.*, f. 21v.

Auriol, just like many Franciscan thinkers in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, uses rather frequently terms like ‘volition’ (*volitio*) and ‘will’ (*voluntas*); this becomes very obvious in the case of a Scotist thinker like Salviati. As we have seen, de Mirabilibus, on the other hand, prefers the phrase ‘free choice’ (*liberum arbitrium*) in his account of predestination, and he does not have much use for the term ‘will’ (*voluntas*). This might reflect a ‘Thomist’ tendency to emphasize the rational aspect in the activity of the will, but it is important to notice that de Mirabilibus explicitly expresses his full agreement with Auriol’s solution to the tension between divine predestination and human free will.

The mythological figure of Hermes Trismegistus, mentioned by de Mirabilibus, seems to have become a standard authority also among some scholastic thinkers of the Renaissance, under the increasing influence of the humanists.⁶³ Let us move on now to the next chapter and discuss a well-known philosophical and theological problem: the problem of evil.

63 For a discussion of a reference to Hermes in Salviati, see below Chapter Six, n. 96, and context. And see Sebastiano Gentile and Carlos Gilly (eds.), *Marsilio Ficino e il ritorno di Ermete Trismegisto* (Florence 1999).

A Renaissance Discourse on Evil

This chapter will present a detailed account of what used to be a well-known philosophical and theological dispute on the question of the nature and origin of evil which took place in Florence in June 1489. The two main participants in this disputation were two scholastic thinkers who were central figures in the intellectual life of Florence during the last decades of the fifteenth century: the Dominican Nicolaus de Mirabilibus (d. 1495), whom we discussed in Chapter One, and the Franciscan Giorgio Benigno Salviati (c. 1448–1520). A contextual analysis of this dispute will give us a better idea of the unique position of some fifteenth-century Florentine thinkers in the transition between late ‘medieval’ and ‘early modern’ discourses. Before I get down to the description and analysis of this dispute, some general remarks concerning its central issue as well as its antecedents are in order.

1 ‘The Problem of Evil’

The question of evil and its nature in relation to the goodness of God, to the powers of human reason, and to the status of human will both in the ethical and the theological spheres is a central one in moral philosophy. In this chapter, we shall look at a specific historical moment in its development which, although relatively unknown, presents us with some important shifts in the understanding of this notion in a period which is essential to the early modern era. As we shall see, the Platonic account of evil as pure privation and nothingness is echoed by a Thomist thinker who, during a philosophical dispute with a Scotist thinker, is shifting his view towards a notion of evil which is subjected to human experience (either linguistic or socially constructed), while still trying to keep a dichotomic separation between God, the absolute good, and evil. This leaves the notion of evil itself in a rather abstract sphere. On the other hand his Scotist rival defends a thesis according to which God created both good and evil. While sharply criticizing the Platonic account, the Scotist is rejecting the abstract notion of evil and its dichotomic separation from the good, and he develops two different notions of evil: first, a notion of relative evils which are concrete entities existing beside, or in fact mixed together with, relative goods; and second, a notion of a specific malice. These notions of evil originated from God, the creator of all goods and evils.

The concept of evil in Western thought is complicated, connected to many other related issues (such as divine-human relations, or will, reason, and irrational impulses), and just like any other central concept it mutates according to the historical context. Evil is reflected in the pessimistic approach we can find in some places in the Bible, doubting man's capacity to understand the divine will and commands. The evils brought upon the biblical figure of Job became, in turn, a *locus classicus* for later theological and philosophical discussions of evil. Although regarded as more optimistic, assuming harmony between man's mind and the laws of nature, ancient Greek and Roman approaches also contain awareness of existing irrational impulses which in many cases are the cause of evil.¹ In other cases, evil is identified with matter;² and when the Greek *logos* was superseded by the Christian *logos*, terms like sin and punishment were also regarded as evil.³

Thus, in many cases, it is impossible to draw a distinction, in the discussions of evil, between a metaphysical, an epistemological, an ontological, or a moral aspect of the problem of evil. We usually find at least two of these aspects in most medieval accounts. The famous *propositio magistralis* of Giles of Rome, for instance, which was adopted some time after the 7th of March 1277 and which contradicts theses condemned by bishop Tempier in his well-known 1277 condemnation, involves an epistemological and a moral level: "there can never be malice in the will unless there is either error or at least some ignorance in reason" (*numquam est malitia in voluntate, nisi sit error vel saltem aliqua nescientia in ratione*).⁴ The same idea can be also found in Thomas Aquinas.⁵ The assumption here is that reason controls and directs the will; a

1 See the detailed discussion of these issues, with many references to ancient sources, in Albrecht Dihle, *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity* (Los Angeles 1982), especially the first two chapters.

2 See, e.g., Plotinus, *Enneads* II, 4, 4; III, 6, 11; Simplicius, *In Aristotelis physicorum libros quattuor priores commentaria* I, 9 (pp. 249 and 256, ed. Diels); Proclus, *In Cratylum commentaria* 30.7.

3 See, e.g., Augustine, *De vera religione* 12, 23; 20, 40; *De civitate dei* 10, 24; John Scotus Eriugena, *De divina praedestinatione liber* 10, 3; Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros sententiarum* II, dist. 35, q. 1, a. 5 (*expositio textus*); dist. 43, q. 1, art. 5 (*responsio ad argumentum* 3); *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae, q. 87, a. 1.

4 Giles of Rome, *Opera omnia III.1. Apologia*, ed. Robert Wielockx (Florence 1985), p. 59; and see the discussion on pp. 75–88. On this issue, with further references to scholarly literature and a general account of the notion of evil in medieval philosophy, see Bonnie Kent, 'Evil in Later Medieval Philosophy', in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 45/2 (2007), pp. 177–205; especially pp. 186–189.

5 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a–2ae, q. 77, a. 2: "In quo quidem aliquialiter recte sapiebat: quia, cum voluntas sit boni vel apparentis boni, nunquam voluntas in malum movetur,

successful rational assessment should always lead the will towards good aims or actions. Evil is possible only when error or ignorance interfere in the rational process, causing reason to direct the will towards wrong or evil aims and actions. What is totally disregarded in this proposition is the possibility of pure evil (or a strong sense of evil)—that is, evil will which leads to evil actions without any error or ignorance in the rational process, but rather out of an evil intention or purpose on the part of an agent who is fully aware and conscious of the evil results of his actions. This, in fact, is the problem of *akrasia*, so familiar to us from Plato, Aristotle and later Greek philosophers. By excluding the possibility of pure evil, the notion of evil itself becomes somewhat weak: evil is identified with error or ignorance and, one could say, it has no essence or existence of its own; in other words, evil can be only accidental, it does not have a substance.⁶

Henry of Ghent seems to be cognisant of this difficulty and some of the implications stemming from the *propositio magistralis*. His focus is on the status of the will and its power to resist and act contrary to reason by using its freedom, rather than on the status of evil itself. According to him, the will is capable of producing malice without any error in the judgment of reason.⁷ Henry rejects

nisi id quod non est bonum, aliquantulum rationi bonum appareat; et propter hoc voluntas nunquam in malum tenderet, nisi cum aliqua ignorantia, vel errore rationis." The last part is cited in Kent, 'Evil in Later Medieval Philosophy', p. 187, n. 31. Thomas discusses the notion of evil in general in his *Summa theologiae* 1a, qq. 48 and 49. Thomas' account found in his *Quaestiones disputatae de malo* will be discussed below.

- 6 Evil is contrasted to both being and the good, and is described as having no form or nature, e.g., in Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1, q. 48, a. 1: "Unde non potest esse quod malum significat quoddam esse, aut quamdam formam, seu naturam. Relinquitur ergo quod nomine mali significetur quaedam absentia boni. Et pro tanto dicitur quod *malum neque est existens, nec bonum*. Quia cum ens, in quantum huiusmodi, sit bonum, eadem est remotio utrumque"; "Unde malum neque ad perfectionem universi pertinet, neque sub ordine universi concluditur, nisi per accidens, id est, ratione boni adjuncti." This is an example of what can be regarded as a weak notion of evil, evil as "the absence of good", and as "accidental only". On the problem of *akrasia* see e.g., Tobias Hoffmann, Jörn Müller, Matthias Perkams (eds.), *The Problem of Weakness of Will in Medieval Philosophy* (Louvain 2006). For an account of the ontological status of evil and goodness mainly in Suárez, who is reflecting previous discussions like that of Cajetan, see Jorge J. E. Gracia, 'Evil and the Transcendentality of Goodness: Suárez's Solution to the Problem of Positive Evils', in Scott MacDonald (ed.), *Being and Goodness. The Concept of the Good in Metaphysics and Philosophical Theology* (Cornell 1991), pp. 151–176; especially pp. 151–161. For Cajetan see Barbara Hallensleben, *Communicatio. Anthropologie und Gnadenlehre bei Thomas de Vio Cajetan* (Münster 1985), pp. 251–259.
- 7 Henry discusses these issues in his *Quodlibet X*, ed. R. Macken (Louvain 1981), qq. 10, 11, and 13, on pp. 255–273, and 286–291; see, e.g., pp. 257–258: "Si vero non sit de appetitu sensitivo

any necessary symmetry between will and reason: correct knowledge does not necessarily lead to correct will. Reason simply cannot be the mover which by natural necessity moves the will, since the will is only moved by itself without any necessity caused by compulsion.⁸ But this notion of malice caused by the free will of the agent without any error or ignorance in reason is already an important shift in the discussion of evil itself. It turns the notion of malice into something independent, real, and concrete, in comparison with what we have in the *propositio magistralis*. Further developments along this line are reflected in the works of John Duns Scotus which will be discussed below as background to some parts of our debate. As we shall shortly see, this shift is essential for the Florentine dispute on evil, where a Scotist thinker is criticizing a weak sense of evil represented by his Thomist adversary, by proposing a strong sense of this term.

notitia in intellectu secundo modo, sed primo tantum, in hoc credo consistere quaestionis difficultatem, utrum scilicet appetitus sensitivus potest movere voluntatem ad consentiendum illi motui et appetendum illud quo ipsa movetur, de quo tamen intellectus nullam habet notitiam assensus aut approbationis, sed speculationis tantum, ut secundum hoc in tali notitia nullus sit error praecedens circa iudicium rationis ipsam malitiam voluntatis. Quod non est aliud quam quaerere an possit esse malitia per appetitum in voluntate ab appetitu sensitivo trahente et alliciente, nullo praecedente errore in ratione circa id quod appetit sensitivus appetitus, et hoc sic, ut error rationis ponatur esse per se causa propter quam fit malitia in appetitu voluntatis, sive saltem causa sine qua non"; p. 259: "Sic ergo stante ratione recta, pro hora in qua stat, potest voluntas ei contrariari, et generari prius malitia in voluntate quam error in ratione proprie dictus generetur, ita quod nullo modo praecedat, neque ut causa propter quam sic, neque ut causa sine qua non."

- 8 *Ibid.*, pp. 266–267: "Sed in hoc sensu distinguenda est illa propositio 'Non necesse est voluntatem et scientiam concordare, sic quod non est necesse quod, si scientia sit recta, voluntas est recta, et e contra, si scientia est obliqua, et voluntas est obliqua', quia li 'necesse' negatum potest dicere necessitatem consequentis vel consequentiae. Si consequentis, sic iterum clarum est quod dictum in illo articulo est error, quia si scientia est recta, non est necesse quod voluntas sit recta ut non possit velle oppositum, ut dictum est in fine praecedentis quaestionis. Si vero dicat necessitatem consequentiae, sic ista 'Si scientia est recta, non est necesse quod voluntas recta' duas habet causas veritatis: unam quia scientia recta non est causa voluntatis rectae, aliam quia voluntas obliqua potest stare simul cum scientia recta aut e contra. In isto primo sensu et secundum istam causam clarum est quod dictum in illo articulo est error. Hoc enim, ut dictum est in fine praecedentis quaestionis, fuit causa principalis damnandi illum articulum, quia scilicet supponit quod ratio sic est motiva necessitate naturali ipsam voluntatem, quod non possit omnino contrariari, quod falsum est quia liberum, et voluntarium quod est liberi arbitrii, non potest sic moveri de necessitate ab alio absque coactione, quia moveri non habet nisi a se sola, aut etiam ab alio secum movente secundum naturae suae congruentiam per libertatem circa summum bonum visum vel per liberum arbitrium circa quodcumque aliud bonum, ut dictum est iam supra."

The transition from a weak sense of evil (evil which has no independent existence and is identified with error or ignorance) to a strong one (evil which stems from a free-willing agent who is conscious of his actions) is the subtext of my interpretation of the Florentine dispute, in which we encounter some of the following questions: Can we distinguish between absolute evil and relative evils? What is the nature of evil? What should be regarded as the main cause of absolute evil? Should absolute evil be identified with original sin or rather with God? Can God, being the absolute good, be related in any way to evil? Can God be responsible for evil, and if so, in what sense? Since these questions and other related issues are not discussed here systematically as in a typical scholastic disputed question, one should simply follow the course of the dispute as it is presented through the arguments contained in the two written accounts of it which we have. Showing the dynamic of the dispute, in the course of which a dialectic transition in the meaning of the concept of evil takes place, will stand at the centre of the present discussion. In this respect, the question of genre becomes essential: we are dealing here with two written accounts of a dispute which took place on two very different occasions, none of which has anything to do with an academic context or a classroom, and this fact dictates in some manner the way in which we should treat it—that is, a rather detailed way, so that the internal dynamic of the development of the dispute can be elucidated. As we shall see, these two accounts of the dispute contain much more information than a formal academic disputed question, and they are part of Renaissance intellectual culture. For these reasons, and since this dispute—once a famous event in the intellectual life of Florence—is little known today, I have chosen to discuss the various stages of it in the order of the historical dispute itself, thus emphasizing the way new ideas and interpretations arise in the very process of a debate between two sides.

2 A Discourse on Evil

Having sketched this background, I shall now present a detailed account of a well-known philosophical and theological dispute on the question of evil which took place in Florence in June 1489.⁹ As I said, the two main participants

9 For the best account of the intellectual scene at the background of this dispute and the basic historical facts and further relevant references, see Kraye, 'Lorenzo and the Philosophers', in *Classical Traditions in Renaissance Philosophy*, IV. For a more detailed account of the philosophical and the theological arguments see Verde, *Lo studio fiorentino 1473–1503: Ricerche e documenti*. vol. IV: *La vita universitaria*, vol. 2, pp. 822–829. For a detailed account of

in this dispute were two scholastic thinkers who were central figures in the intellectual life of Florence during the last decades of the fifteenth century: the Dominican Nicolaus de Mirabilibus and the Franciscan Giorgio Benigno Salviati.¹⁰ They were surrounded by some of the most prominent figures of the day: the humanist Angelo Poliziano, the humanist-oriented philosophers Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, not to mention Lorenzo de' Medici himself, together with other important scholastic thinkers like Mengo Bianchelli and Bernardo Torni, all taking part in the dispute, which began as a public dispute between the Dominicans and the Franciscans at Santa Reparata just before the procession in honour of St John the Baptist, and continued at Lorenzo's palace about a week later. This is an interesting event, through which we can have a glimpse of the dialectical relations between humanist and scholastic thinkers on the one hand, and between different late scholastic traditions, mainly the Thomist and the Scotist schools, on the other. We shall first discuss briefly the historical context, then present the basic philosophical and theological framework through the first and shorter surviving account of this dispute, written by de Mirabilibus. We shall then discuss Salviati's longer reaction, preserved in the second written account of this dispute, and end with some conclusions concerning the nature of late fifteenth-century scholasticism in Renaissance Florence.

Theological disputes were by no means rare among Florentine intellectuals in the late fifteenth century: suffice it to mention here the dispute between Lorenzo de' Medici and Marsilio Ficino regarding the best faculty in our soul for acquiring happiness, the intellect or the will, that took place in Careggi around 1474, and the detailed reconstruction of this dispute by a leading Dominican theologian, Vincenzo Bandello;¹¹ or Pico's famous idea of having a public theological and philosophical dispute in Rome on his 900 theses in 1486,

Poliziano's intervention in this dispute in the context of humanist theology see Salvatore I. Camporeale, 'L'esegesi umanistica del Valla e il simposio teologico di Lorenzo il Magnifico a palazzo Medici. L'intervento di Poliziano', in Luisa Secchi Tarugi (ed.), *Poliziano nel suo tempo. Atti del VI convegno internazionale (Chianciano-Montepulciano 18–21 luglio 1994)* (Florence 1996), pp. 283–295.

10 For references to works where some basic biographical details of Nicolaus de Mirabilibus and his works are discussed see above Chapter One, n. 5. On Giorgio Benigno Salviati see Cesare Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione. Studi sulla cultura del Cinquecento e del Seicento* (Naples 1974), pp. 17–127; on pp. 17–20 we have a general description of this dispute and the list of Salviati's conclusions. See also Vasoli's *Filosofia e religione nella cultura del Rinascimento* (Naples 1988), pp. 139–182, for a detailed account of Salviati's Scotist commentary on Lorenzo de' Medici's sonnet. And see also Chapter Six in this volume.

11 A detailed account of this debate can be found in Chapter Five of this volume.

to make this point. Not only did the scholastic tradition of the disputed question and the quodlibetal literature continue to flourish well into the early modern period,¹² but this long-standing tradition, which was constantly developing and changing, had now to face a recent intellectual challenge: that of the humanists. The Florentine humanists, on their part, show a deep and sincere interest in the doctrinal questions concerning theological issues and in their philosophical implications discussed in these debates. As we shall see also in the case of the present debate, they contributed to it, using their expertise, while being able to play an active role in some of the more technical scholastic discussions. Understanding the role played by the humanists in theological debates is part of an overall understanding of humanist thinkers and their context. But a reconstruction of fifteenth-century intellectual history and its importance to the pre-modern era will not be complete without a detailed consideration of late scholastic schools and their achievements. This chapter aims mainly at this last point. Let us now move on to the first written account of the dispute.

2.1 Part One

Although shorter in length, Nicolaus de Mirabilibus' *Disputatio nuper facta in domo Magnifici Laurentii Medices* contains not only his account of the second part of the dispute which took place at Lorenzo's palace on June 30, but also an account of the first part which took place a week before, on June 23, at the church of Santa Reparata. Nicolaus' work was published in Florence a month later, on July 27, 1489.¹³ Thus, we have here, in its two stages, from the starting point until the second and main stage, the dispute between Nicolaus and Salviati on the origin and nature of evil and its relation to God. We must

12 The idea concerning some kind of a break in the scholastic tradition which had occurred at some point during the transition from the Middle-Ages to the early modern period is now justly regarded as a historiographical cliché which is related to yet another cliché, the assumption of a decline in the scholastic philosophical discourse after the thirteenth century. For the late medieval tradition see, e.g., Christopher Schabel (ed.), *Theological Quodlibeta in the Middle Ages. The Fourteenth Century* (Leiden 2007). For some synoptic accounts see, e.g., Quinto, *Scholastica. Storia di un concetto*; Marco Forlivesi, 'A Man, an Age, a Book', in Marco Forlivesi (ed.), *Rem in seipsa cernere. Saggi sul pensiero filosofico di Bartolomeo Mastri (1602–1673)* (Padua 2006), pp. 23–144, especially section two on pp. 29–114; Monfasani, 'The Renaissance as the Concluding Phase of the Middle Ages'.

13 I have used the *incunabulum* of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence, Landau. Finaly 42. I have modernized the punctuation and to some extent the use of capital letters. Both de Mirabilibus' and Salviati's (see n. 23) accounts were published in Jenő Ábel (ed.), *Irodalomtörténeti emlékek I* (Budapest 1886), pp. 351–426.

remember, however, that Nicolaus' account is only of the dispute itself, while Salviati already reacts also to Nicolaus' written account.

On the last page of his work, Nicolaus calls the event which took place in Lorenzo's palace a *questio disputata*.¹⁴ This is the technical scholastic or academic term. But in his short opening section, while addressing Lorenzo, to whom he dedicated his account, he uses a more general term which is very appealing to Lorenzo's Platonic circle: *convivium*.¹⁵ There is nothing strange here: the participants who were invited by Lorenzo to his palace enjoyed his generous hospitality before going on with the dispute. On the next page Nicolaus mentions Plato's ideal of combining political power and wisdom while praising Lorenzo for his initiative of both the *convivium* and the *disputatio*. The analogy between Plato's philosopher-king and Lorenzo is explicitly pointed out.¹⁶ What is also obvious is that Nicolaus is well aware of the humanist fashion in Florence, just as Poliziano, Ficino and Pico, for instance, were interested in the scholastic dispute. Combining a *convivium* and a *disputatio* seemed perfectly reasonable for the participants and part of their intellectual environment.

Let us examine now Nicolaus' account of the first dispute. The Franciscans, led by the prior of Santa Croce Giorgio Benigno Salviati, posited a conclusion according to which Adam's sin was not the gravest of all sins. Against this conclusion a Thomist, Iohannes Victorii de Camerino, presented the following syllogism: the greatest sin is one from which all other sins have originated; but Adam's sin is exactly such a kind of sin; therefore, Adam's sin is the greatest of

14 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, *Disputatio nuper facta in domo Magnifici Laurentii Medices* (Florence 1489), p. 13: "Finis questionis disputate in domo Magnifici Laurentii Medices ultima die Iunii M.cccc.lxxxviii." On the scholastic *Quaestio* see e.g., Brian Lawn, *The Rise and Decline of the Scholastic 'Quaestio Disputata' With Special Emphasis on its Use in the Teaching of Medicine and Science* (Leiden 1993); Bernardo C. Bazàn, John F. Wippel, Gérard Fransen, and Danielle Jacquart, *Les questions disputées et les questions quodlibétiques dans les facultés de théologie, de droit et de médecine* (Louvain 1985), especially the first two parts, by Bazàn and Wippel, on pp. 15–222; John Marenbon, *Later Medieval Philosophy (1150–1350). An Introduction* (London 1987), especially pp. 27–34.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 1: "Post convivium illud abs te Magnifice Laurenti magnifice ac splendide factum redeunti mihi domum et disputationis illius nostre decisiones ac determinationes mente et animo revolventi..."

16 *Ibid.*, p. 2a: "...ad te [Laurentium] unum omnia referre tanquam ad principem et auctorem, tam convivii quam disputationis nostre, in quo iuxta Platonem potentiam simul cum sapientia coniunxi<sti>."

all sins.¹⁷ While the respondent accepted the first proposition, he rejected the second, arguing that from Adam's sin came all the sicknesses, original sin, the rebellion of the flesh, ignorance, death, and the rest of our singular or individual evils, but not the principal cause of these evils; this cause should still be looked for.¹⁸ There is here an important distinction between *singula nostra mala* and *principalis causa malorum* or *maximum peccatorum*: the first represents relative evils while the second represents absolute evil, the origin and cause of all these relative and individual evils. And so, the dispute was now focused on the principal cause of relative evils, or on absolute evil. After a long discussion the Franciscans reached the following conclusion: the *per se* and principal cause of all evils is God's will or the divine decree.¹⁹ Both Iohannes and Nicolaus could not accept such a conclusion: while Iohannes regarded it as doubtful and suspicious, Nicolaus considered it as heretical.²⁰ Iohannes insisted on the logical necessity of his syllogism. Nicolaus' critique of the conclusion already implies that he was not willing to accept the distinction between absolute evil and relative evils: there is one sin which should be

17 *Ibid.*: "Conclusio publice posita in templo dive reparate xxiii Iunii et in vigilia S. Iohannis baptiste ut mos est per fratres sacri ordinis minorum sub Egregio ac subtili sacre theologie professore magistro Georgio benigni regente sancte crucis. Peccatum Ade non est maximum omnium peccatorum. Contra quam conclusionem Dominus Iohannes victorii de Camerino tali medio argumentatus est. Illud est maximum peccatum ex quo evenerunt omnia mala; sed peccatum Ade est huiusmodi; ergo peccatum Ade est maximum omnium peccatorum."

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 2a–2b: "Maiorem concessit respondens secundum quod illud est maximum peccatorum ex quo evenerunt omnia mala; minorem autem negavit, quod peccatum Ade sit illud ex quo talia evenerunt; quam arguens sic probavit. Ex peccato Ade evenere infirmitates omnes, originale peccatum, rebellio carnis, ignorantia, mors, et alia huiusmodi discurrendo per singula nostra mala; ergo, negavit in super respondens ab adam tanque a principali causa haec mala evenisse; petitum fuit si non ab adam tanque a causa principali..."

19 *Ibid.*, p. 2b: "...quaeritur de causa principali horum malorum; quam post longam discussionem dixere praedictam conclusionem defendentes: omnium malorum voluntatem Dei vel decretum divinum esse causam per se et principalem..." Compare this conclusion to Salutati's *De fato et fortuna*, ed. Concetta Bianca (Florence 1985), p. 12: "Omnes ergo cause a Deo divinaque providentia sunt sibi que parent nec plus faciunt atque possunt quam in ista providentia fuerit ab eterno."

20 *Ibid.*: "...quam respensionem praedictus Iohannes sibi dubiam et suspectam dixit. Ego autem verius loquens dixi potius haereticam."

regarded as the gravest of all sins according to its gravity, and this is Adam's sin, the cause of all other evils.²¹

The starting-point of the second dispute held in Lorenzo's palace is Giorgio Benigno Salviati's defense of his conclusion that the divine will is the *per se*, principal, and efficient cause of all evils. Nicolaus also gives the names of the most famous participants in this dispute.²² One notices that in the second dispute, according to Nicolaus' account, the notion of efficient cause was added to the original conclusion of the first dispute. On the same page we find yet another formulation of the conclusion defended by Salviati:

The glorious God is the *per se* and the principal cause of every effect, either good or evil, whatever is evil and has such a name.²³

Nicolaus' discussion is focused on attacking this conclusion. It is important to notice that this formulation places the discussion solely in the world of man, in which we find that linguistic conventions expressed by names or words determine what is regarded as good or evil. This is a relative conception of good and evil. Salviati's point is that God is responsible for everything which we call evil. This subtle point has been overlooked by Nicolaus who

21 *Ibid.*: "Postea adductus tum ipsa veritate; tum quia idem Iohannes tam in philosophia quam in theologia ac et in aliis nostri Sanctissimi Doctoris veram sequitur doctrinam; factis quibusdam argumentis contra hoc: accepi argumentum factum secundum quod illud est maximum peccatum, ex quo evenerunt omnia mala; sed peccatum Ade est huiusmodi; ergo et dixi quod minor erat bene probata per arguentem; et quod concessa maiori, quam concesserat respondens argumentum de necessitate concludit. Sed meo iudicio et in hoc vero: volenti defendere conclusionem positam, maior erat distinguenda de magnitudine peccati extensiva et intensiva, et non concedenda."

22 *Ibid.*, p. 3a: "Volens autem postea defendere suam responsionem Magister Georgius, que fuit quod voluntas divina sit per se causa principalis et efficiens omnium malorum, in domo tue Magnificentie coram Magnifico Comite Mirandule Domino Iohanne Pico; venerando ministro minorum Magistro Carolo ordinis servorum regente annuntiate; Domino Marsilio Ficino; Domino Angelo Poliziano; Magistro Megno et Magistro Bernardo in medicina et in philosophia peritissimis; ac nonnullis aliis praestantissimis viris..."

23 *Ibid.*: "Omnis effectus sive boni sive mali, quodcunque malum sit nomen habens tale, Deus gloriosus est causa per se et principalis." Compare Salviati's identical formulation of this thesis in his *Septem et septuaginta in opusculo Magistri Nicolai de Mirabilibus reperta mirabilia* (Florence 1489). I have used the *incunabulum* of the Biblioteca Riccardiana in Florence, Ricc. Ediz. Rare. 600; see p. 51b. In this case too I have modernized the punctuation and to some extent the use of capital letters.

immediately regards this conclusion as false and heretical, and contrary to Scripture and to the writings of the theologians.²⁴

Nicolaus' first two arguments against Salviati's conclusion, taken from the Neoplatonic arsenal, are focused on the nature of evil as *pura privatio* and as absolute negativity and nothingness which is totally contrasted to being, which is positive and good. Only such being can have a *per se* and principal cause, claims the Dominican. A *per se* and principal cause is determined according to its effect, which must be something (*res quaedam*): otherwise, it will not be the *per se* cause of such an effect.²⁵ As we have seen, such a conception of evil is essentially different from Salviati's.

Nicolaus presents Salviati's response:

The above-mentioned magister Georgius replied by conceding that God is not the *per se* cause of evil itself as such, i.e., of its deformity or of what

24 *Ibid.*: "Ego frater Nicholaus de Mirabilibus feci argumentationes subscriptas, probando conclusionem positam esse falsam et de heresi suspectam, utpote sacris omnium scripturarum et theologorum dictis adversam."

25 *Ibid.*, pp. 3a–3b: "Impossibile est puram privationem habere causam per se et principalem; cum causa per se terminetur ad per se effectivum qui est res quaedam, alias non esset causa per se respectu talis effectus. Et ita est oppositum in adiecto, nisi concedatur haec propositio; sed impossibile est puram privationem ut sic habere causam per se et principalem. Sed malum est privatio eius quod quis natus est et debitum habere ergo malum ut malum nullomodo potest habere causam per se. Et per consequens Deus non erit per se causa mali ut sic. Minor probatur. Aut enim malum ut malum; est ens positivum; aut privativum vel negatio. Non potest dici quod malum in quantum malum sit ens positivum, tum quia omne ens positivum aliquid ponit in rerum natura, alias non esset positivum. Sed malum ut malum nihil ponit in rerum natura, sicut nec cecitas vel surditas, sed potius removet rectum ordinem ab ultimo fine cum malum sit aversio ab ultimo fine secundum omnes doctores; tum etiam quia omne ens positivum est aliquid et omne aliquid est bonum; ens enim et bonum convertuntur secundum omnes methaphisican-tes; ergo malum ut malum est pura privatio vel negatio non potens habere causam per se." We can find the Neoplatonic formula, *Omne autem quod est, in quantum est, bonum est*, in Augustine's *De diversis quaestionibus* XXIV; see also chapter XXI. These chapters are echoed in Peter Lombard's *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae*, II, XXXVII, I. On p. 7b de Mirabilibus refers to this passage in Lombard's *Sentences*. For *pura privatio* as the definition of evil see, for instance, Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros sententiarum* II, dist. 34, q. 1, a. 4; IV, dist. 44, q. 2, a. 3, and dist. 50, q. 2, a. 1; *Summa theologiae* 1a, q. 48, a. 2; 1a–2ae, q. 73, a. 2. For the idea that evil is something which does not exist by itself, and thus does not exist positively (*positive*) in the subject, see Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de malo*, q. 1, a. 2, where Thomas constantly refers to pseudo-Dionysius' *De divinis nominibus* 4, a locus classicus for any scholastic discussion of evil.

is formally called evil. Rather, God is the cause of what is materially considered evil. Since God Himself is the *per se* cause of every effect, and since some effects are called good and other evil, God is the *per se* cause of these effects, either good or evil; and this is how the posited conclusion is sound.²⁶

Salviati's explanation of his own conclusion seems now to be better understood by Nicolaus. In his reaction the Dominican now moves from a Neoplatonic notion of evil towards a notion which is much closer to the one held by his Franciscan rival, that is, a notion of evil which is subjected to human experience instead of to philosophical formulae or clichés. Thus, Nicolaus presents a distinction between acts and effects on the one hand, and their nature or character as good or evil on the other. According to Nicolaus, God is the creator and the *per se* and principal cause of acts and effects only. The determination of good or evil depends upon human behaviour or the human context in which these acts and effects are performed. He gives as an example the act of fornication (*fornicatio*), which, according to him, was created by God as an act only; this act, when it is performed outside a marriage relation, should be regarded as evil, but in a marriage relation it is of course good. This distinction between an act and its nature as good or evil enables Nicolaus to maintain a separation between God and any real aspect of evil such as deformity (*deformitas*) and malice (*malitia*).²⁷

26 *Ibid.*, pp. 3b–4a: “Respondit praefatus Magister Georgius concedendo Deum non esse per se causam ipsius mali in quantum malum est, id est ipsius deformitatis seu mali formaliter dicti; sed deus est causa mali materialiter accepti; hoc est ipse deus per se est causa omnis effectus et quia aliqui effectus denominantur boni et aliqui mali, illorum effectuum sive bonorum sive malorum deus est causa per se et sic etiam sonat conclusio posita.”

27 *Ibid.*, p. 4a: “Accipio aliquem actum qui denominetur malus utputa actum fornicationis. Et arguo sic. Aut Deus est causa per se istius actus fornicationis vel homicidii, in quantum est actus tantum vel in quantum est actus deformis et malus. Si dicis quod deus est causa actus istius prout est actus tantum; ergo per hoc Deus nullomodo dicitur esse causa per se ipsius mali consequentia tenet, quia actus tantum, et adeo est et non dicitur malus; alias iste actus in matrimonio etiam esse malus, quod est falsum. Ex hoc ergo quod Deus est causa effectus vel actus alicuius ut effectus vel actus tantum, deus non potest dici causa mali; oportebit ergo dicere quod si Deus est causa per se ipsius mali, quod sit causa istius actus fornicationis prout est deformis et malus et non prout est actus tantum, et ita tenendo hanc opinionem necesse erit dicere quod deus sit causa per se ipsius deformitatis et malitiae, quod est haereticum utpote contra omnes auctoritates scripturarum et doctorum.” The act of fornication as treated by Giles of Rome is mentioned in Kent, ‘Evil in Later Medieval Philosophy’, pp. 189–190, while discussing P. S. Eardley’s ‘Thomas Aquinas

Let us examine two places in Thomas Aquinas' commentary to Peter Lombard's *Sentences*:

All acts, in so far as they are acts, originated from God; but in so far as they contain deformity, are not originated from God, but rather from man or the devil.²⁸

Whence some acts are the same with regard to nature, but differ with regard to moral behaviour—such as fornication and matrimonial act.²⁹

and Giles of Rome on the Will', in *The Review of Metaphysics* 56 (June 2003), pp. 835–862. Eardley, who argues for a voluntarist twist in the thought of Giles, mentions on p. 854, Giles' example of fornication, found in his *Quodlibet* III, q. 15. Giles, differently from Nicolaus, regards this act as good from the point of view of pleasure, and as evil from the point of view of reflecting inordinate conduct. For a very interesting parallel (which deserves further scholarly attention) and a similar separation of acts from their moral determination in the second act of the will, according to an important representative of the Scotist school in the fourteenth century—Francis of Marchia—see Guido Alliney, 'Francis of Marchia's Theory of the Will', in *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 79/2 (2012), pp. 399–426, see especially pp. 405–406. For a similar separation between acts and their moral determination in the classical context see Pausanias' speech in Plato's *Symposium*, 180e4–181a6. One should notice that moral indifference in human actions is wholly rejected by Cajetan who declares that *nullus est actus humanus singularis indifferens moraliter*. See the discussion and the quotation in Hallensleben, *Communicatio. Anthropologie und Gnadenlehre bei Thomas de Vio Cajetan*, p. 340 and n. 36 there. See also the critique by Niccolò Tignosi of those who held a deterministic perspective in moral issues (i.e., that moral issues are determined either by chance or by fortune or by God), while neglecting human freedom, in *Nicolai Tignosii Fulginatis ad Cosmam Medicem in illos qui mea in Aristotelis comentaria criminantur opusculum*, in Mario Sensi, 'Niccolò Tignosi da Foligno. L'opera e il pensiero', in *Annali della facoltà di lettere e filosofia* IX (1971–1972; Università degli studi di Perugia 1973), pp. 359–495; see, pp. 475–476: "Satiatus enim foret si cum Democrito sentirent omnia casu, fortunaque contingere. Rursus illud nefandissimum adducentes, scilicet opera bona nullo nobis emolumento persistere, quoniam predestinati et presciti sunt homines; deum esse causam malorum omnium perblasphemant. Nam si Deus falli non potest cum sua scientia rerum omnium causa sit, prorsus bonos essendi, vel malos a nobis omnis potentia summovetur." On Tignosi see also Chapter Eight, n. 8 below.

28 Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros sententiarum* II, dist. 37, q. 2, a. 2: "... omnes actus, in quantum actus sunt, ex Deo esse: sed quod, in quantum deformitatem habent, a Deo non sunt, sed ab homine vel diabolo ..."

29 *Ibid.*, IV, dist. 16, q. 3, a. 1: "Unde aliqui actus sunt idem in specie naturae qui differunt in specie moris: sicut fornicatio et actus matrimonialis."

Basically, one could argue, we have here the source of Nicolaus' arguments. Yet we should notice that in the context of Thomas' commentary these ideas do not stand at the centre of the discussion. The first citation is from the response to the first argument in book II, distinction 37, question 2, article 2, where Thomas is much more concerned with refuting the opinion according to which acts of sin, even in so far as they are acts, do not originate from God.³⁰ Such an opinion gives too much power to the human will in producing acts, and assumes that God is not the universal cause of all beings, since these acts of sin which are some kind of beings, and thus have essence, have not originated from God.³¹ Thomas goes on to distinguish between a first cause, God's governance (*ordo Dei*) which contains no defect, and a second cause, created will (*voluntas creata*) from which a defect can originate.³² He is focused on determining the right relations between God, acts of sin, and the created will: God is the first agent of all acts, including acts of sin through the will, but the defect originates only from the will and cannot originate in, or be related to, God. Thus, God is responsible in acts of sin only for the act and its being.³³ The second citation is from the response to the second argument in book IV, distinction 16, question 3, article 1, where the subject is the relative nature of moral acts.³⁴ Nicolaus is thus putting together ideas which are found in different contexts in Thomas, and using them in yet another context: his dispute with

30 *Ibid.*, II, dist. 37, q. 2, a. 2: "Alia opinio dicebat, actus peccatorum nullo modo, nec etiam inquantum actus sunt, a Deo esse..."

31 *Ibid.*: "... unde si voluntas humana actionem aliquam posset producere cuius auctor Deus non esset, voluntas humana rationem primi principii haberet"; "... si actiones peccati a Deo non sunt, quod aliquod ens essentiam habens a Deo non esset, et ita Deus non esset universalis causa omnium entium, quod est contra perfectionem primi entis."

32 *Ibid.*: "Similiter etiam est ordo Dei ad voluntatem creatam sicut causae primae ad causam secundam. Ideo ex parte Dei nullus defectus incidere potest; voluntas autem creata ad defectum possibilis est..."

33 *Ibid.*: "... et ideo quidquid est in actu deficiente, scilicet peccato, de ratione actus, et entis, et boni, totum hoc a primo agente, scilicet Deo, procedit, mediante voluntate; sed ipse defectus qui est in actu, hoc modo est a voluntate quod a Deo non procedit; et ideo quocumque nomen deformitatem simul cum actu significat, sive in generali, sive in speciali, non potest dici quod a Deo sit simpliciter; unde non potest dici absolute quod peccatum sit a Deo, ut homicidium, aut aliquid huiusmodi, nisi cum hac additione, inquantum est actus et inquantum est ens."

34 *Ibid.*, IV, dist. 16, q. 3, a. 1: "... dicendum quod aliqui actus ex suo genere sunt mali vel boni. Et ideo ex ipso genere actus potest sumi circumstantia actus moralis. Hoc autem ex quo actus imponitur in tali genere, quamvis sit de substantia ejus inquantum est in genere moris, tamen est extra substantiam ipsius secundum quod consideratur ipsa substantia actus absolute."

Salviati on the nature and origin of evil. But this is not the only difference between them.

Beyond emphasizing far more than Thomas the distinction between an act and its ethical determination as good or evil (but without mentioning God's responsibility for its being as well), and paying more attention to the concept of evil itself than to the concept of sin, Nicolaus is not specifically relating God to good acts, as Thomas does.³⁵ In this respect, Nicolaus' distinction is sharper and less nuanced than Thomas', and does not take into consideration a second cause or the restrictions expressed by Thomas in using the adverbs *simpliciter* and *absolute*. As often happened in public disputes, disputants tend to express more extreme points of view in order to differ from, and to refute, the opposite party. This is what may have happened here to Nicolaus, and his distinction indeed contains some remarkable implications for ethics and moral psychology.

Next, on a theological level, Nicolaus argues that it is impossible to relate God to something which He clearly according to Scripture prohibits, punishes for it, and hates.³⁶

After complaining that his arguments were not refuted by Salviati, Nicolaus presents two reactions: Pico's and Mengo Bianchelli's, both arguing that God might be materially regarded as the cause of evil, but not formally.³⁷ As we shall see, Nicolaus is not willing to accept this solution, but we also notice the

35 *Ibid.*, II, dist. 37, q. 2, a. 2.: "... Deus dicitur causa bonarum operationum non solum quantum ad essentiam actus, sed etiam quantum ad perfectionem secundum quam bonae dicuntur: utrumque enim agenti influit, et ut agat, et ut bene agat. Sed in malis actionibus, quamvis sit causa earum quantum ad essentiam, non tamen est causa quantum ad defectum; et ideo absolute dicendus est causa bonorum operum, non autem peccatorum."

36 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, *Disputatio nuper facta*, p. 4b: "Preterea deus odit actum malum ut sic; et impium et impietatem suam, Sapientie xiiii (Sap 14, 9); ergo non est causa per se talis actus mali. Omnes iste tres consequentie sunt manifeste. Impossibile enim est quod idem sit per se principalis causa eius quod prohibet, ulciscitur, et odit." In Wisdom 14, 12, we find that "initium enim fornicationis est exquisitio idolorum" which might be the inspiration for the *fornicatio* discussed in n. 27 above.

37 *Ibid.*, pp. 4b–5a: "Haec replica nostra nunquam fuit assumpta, nec soluta, licet sepiissime rogarem ut repeteret defendens conclusiones, respondendo vel ad maiorem vel ad minorem. Nisi quod Magnificus dominus Iohannes Comes Mirandule dixit nos esse concordem in sententia et in verbis discordes; quoniam Deus non est causa per se ipsius mali formaliter dicti, licet sit causa mali materialiter dicti. Hinc motus peritissimus ille philosophus Magister Menghus probavit hanc propositionem simpliciter esse falsam, secundum quod Deus sit causa per se ipsius mali, nisi semper addatur determinatio ista: sed materialiter dicti. Sic enim poterit concedi Deum esse causam mali materialiter dicti, non tamen mali secundum se et absolute accepti."

fact that the Florentine humanists are active participants in this scholastic dispute on issues concerning moral theology. They did not just come to the *convivium* at Lorenzo's palace, they seem deeply interested in the *disputatio*, and so, the scholastic logician and Aristotelian physician Bianchelli can approve of the opinion of Pico, the humanist-oriented philosopher, by using his own philosophical jargon, knowing that he is going to be understood by all the participants, scholastics and humanists alike. Thus, Bianchelli argues, without adding the adverb *materialiter* to the proposition 'God is the *per se* cause of evil', it would be impossible not to identify God with deformity (which is the chief meaning of "evil"), because of an old Aristotelian principle: that, unless otherwise stated, one always understands a term in its common and basic meaning.³⁸

But our Dominican disputant cannot keep himself too long from the "Platonic" notion of evil, according to which no one, certainly not God, is intentionally capable of doing an evil act as such. Such an act is never intended or wished for.³⁹ But on the same page we find that Nicolaus goes beyond the Platonic notion of evil and reflects the more complicated medieval psychology regarding the human soul being seduced by sensual desire or irascible passion.⁴⁰ These powers or impulses in our post-lapsarian soul are thus

38 *Ibid.*, p. 5a: "Semper terminus secundum se acceptus accipitur pro suo significato formali et principali, nisi sit equivocus terminus; tunc enim semper est distinguendus, alias non: ut habere in perihermeniiis et in libro elencorum, et ex famosa omnium dialectorum propositione qua dicitur semper terminus secundum se acceptus accipitur pro suo significato famosiori; ergo quando dicitur Deus est causa mali, hic malum accipitur pro suo significato formali et principali quod est deformitas, et ita si Deus dicatur sine additione esse per se causa ipsius mali necesse erit dicere quod Deus sit causa ipsius deformitatis, quod est absurdum; consequentia nota est: qua formale significatum mali est deformitas quae formaliter est malum."

39 *Ibid.*, p. 5b: "Impossibile est quod illud sit per se et principaliter causatum ab aliqua causa et maxime a Deo: quod evenit praeter intentionem talis agentis. Sed actus vel effectus malus ut malus est non est per se principaliter intentus nec desideratus a Deo vel ab aliquo agente; ergo actus malus ut malus non potest esse causatus per se et principaliter ab ipso Deo." See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae, q. 79, a. 2: "Praeterea, homo non dicitur esse causa peccati nisi quia homo est causa actus peccati: *nullus enim intendens ad malum operatur*, ut Dionysius dicit (*De divinis nominibus* 4. PG 3, pp. 716, 732)." This article is mentioned by de Mirabilibus on p. 9b and we shall discuss it again later. See also Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de malo*, q. 1, a. 3: "Malum autem in quantum huiusmodi non potest esse intentum, nec aliquo modo volitum vel desideratum, quia esse appetibile habet rationi boni, cui opponitur malum in quantum huiusmodi."

40 *Ibid.*: "...tum quia etiam nullus intendit actum malum ut malus est, sed ut delectetur secundum vim concupiscibilem vel irascibilem." Both *vires* are discussed, for instance, in Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a, q. 81, a. 2.

regarded as the causes of evil acts. There is no reason for Nicolaus to look for another cause.

Next, Nicolaus mentions the important role of the will in performing any kind of act. Thus, God's acts reflect his will; but since it is impossible that God would want to perform an evil act as such, it is impossible to regard Him as the *per se* cause of an evil act. It is very important for Nicolaus to draw a complete separation between God and evil; God is neither in Himself the cause of evil, nor can a cause of an evil act exist under divine causality. Therefore, one cannot accept any causal relation between God and evil, either formally or materially, claims Nicolaus.⁴¹ Thus, the Dominican rejects the solution which was presented earlier by Pico and Bianchelli, and which will be a central issue in Salviati's account.

Nicolaus de Mirabilibus' last two points, emphasizing the intention and the will in God's actions, contain a restriction upon his own argument that God is the creator and cause of acts only, without determining them as good or evil. By bringing the divine intention and will into the picture, the Dominican tacitly relates God to the good. We have here the beginning of a tension between a logical and a theological level in Nicolaus' discussion. This tension is also evident in the next argument, in which Nicolaus rejects the possibility that God would have a certain and determined disposition towards an evil act, which He would, if He were the cause of such an act; and so God is the cause of acts and effects only, since otherwise it will be impossible not to relate God to the realizations of evil acts and effects: deformity and disorder.⁴²

41 *Ibid.*, p. 6a: "Impossibile est quod Deus possit per se principaliter aliquid efficere nisi per se principaliter illud velit; cum suum efficere sit suum velle. Sed penitus impossibile est quod Deus possit velle aliquem actum malum ut malus est; ergo impossibile est quod Deus sit per se causa actus mali ut malus est. Minor est manifesta quia sic deus peccaret volendo per se actum malum ut malus est et influendo in eum; ergo necesse est dicere quod Deus velit solum actus ut bonus est et non actum malum, et per consequens, impossibile est quod Deus sit per se causa actus mali vel effectus mali; cum nullo modo per se et principaliter velit effectum vel actum malum. Deus ergo nec est causa mali in se, nec etiam causa actus mali prout subest causationi divine; ergo nec formaliter nec materialiter. Immo nullo modo est causa peccati vel mali effectus."

42 *Ibid.*, pp. 6a–6b: "Omnis per se et principalis causa alicuius effectus habet certum et determinatum ordinem ad suum per se effectum; alias haec non erit per se causa talis effectus. Sed impossibile est quod Deus habet certum et determinatum ordinem ad actum malum ut malus est; ergo impossibile est Deum esse per se causam alicuius mali effectus ut malus est, sed tantummodo ut actus vel effectus est. Minorem probavi sic. Nam actus vel effectus malus ut malus est includit essentialiter et necessario aliquam deordinationem et deformitatem, alias non est actus malus; si nullam deordinationem includeret. Sed actus vel effectus per se ordinatus et causatus a Deo, ut sic nullam deordinationem vel deformitatem habere potest; alias Deus esset per se causa illius deformitatis et deordinationis,

By separating God from the nature of an act or an effect, Nicolaus tried to eschew the conclusion that God is the cause of an evil act or effect. But such a separation includes, from a logical point of view, also a separation of God and good acts or effects. In other words, God cannot be the cause of good acts either. This is of course a problematic conclusion from a theological point of view. Nicolaus can still argue that since God is good in his essence He is related to good acts by the power of his essence, thus breaking the logical symmetry on the theological level: God is separated from evil and related to the good. But this separation of acts and their nature on the logical level has the important implication of leaving the determination of an act as good or evil to a specific context, in which, in the case of evil acts, we can be mistaken or be under the influence of powers inside our post-lapsarian soul; but what about good acts? Are they subjected only to our own better understanding of the situations, or are they somehow related to God? Keeping the logical separation here will seclude God from any ethical aspect, and this is certainly not the kind of God that Nicolaus would like to see as a theologian.

As we have just seen, it is easier to maintain the logical separation between acts and their nature as far as evil acts are concerned; and therefore, in the following arguments, Nicolaus rejects any similitude between an evil act which is the cause of a blame (*culpa*) and God, or any connection between the defect (*defectus*) which is included in an evil act and God, by restating this separation.⁴³ God can only be regarded as the cause of evil as far as punishment (*pena*) is concerned, and this should be regarded as a just act—and, as is clear from the reference to Peter Lombard, what is just is in fact good.⁴⁴

quod est haereticum potius quam catholicum; ergo impossibile est Deum esse per se causam alicuius effectus mali ut malus.”

43 *Ibid.*, p. 7a: “Omnis effectus per se alicuius cause accipit ut sic aliquam similitudinem a sua per se causa. Sed impossibile est quod actus malus culpe ut malus est accipiat aliquam similitudinem ab ipso Deo; ergo impossibile est Deum esse causam per se principalem actus mali culpe ut malus est; licet sit causa actus ut actus est tantummodo”; “Impossibile est illum artificem esse per se causam mali actus ut malus est, in cuius actione ut sic nullomodo inveniri potest aliquis defectus nec ex parte agentis nec ex parte actionis. Sed penitus impossibile est in actione vel causatione Dei inveniri aliquem defectum prout actio Dei est; ergo impossibile est quod influat et per se causet actum malum ut malus est; ergo est tantum causa actus.”

44 *Ibid.*, p. 7b: “Item tota illa xxxvii distinctio Magistri in secundo Sententiarum declarat per auctoritates sanctorum Deum non esse causam peccati aut mali culpe nisi mali pene; iuste eam propter nostram culpam infligendo.” See Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, II, XXXVII, I: “Malorum ergo poena, quae a Deo est, malum est quidem malis, sed in bonis Dei operibus est; quoniam iustum est ut mali puniantur, et utique bonum est omne quod iustum

We have already mentioned that Nicolaus rejected the argument that God is materially but not formally the cause of sin, presented by Pico and Bianchelli. What is formally false is downright (*simpliciter*) false, he claims.⁴⁵ The same formula works also on the positive side: what is formally such, is indeed such. The authority cited by Nicolaus is that of 'all the Scotists', and thus the Franciscan point of view in the dispute is contrasted to that of the Scotists.⁴⁶

The Dominican is using the phrase *valde bonum* found in the first chapter of Genesis (in Genesis 1, 31, we have *valde bona*, referring to all the things which were created by God), again to reject the distinction between what is formally a cause of evil and what is materially a cause of evil: something which is certainly good cannot possibly be either formally or materially evil.⁴⁷ This phrase excludes any evil by dint of its signification, claims Nicolaus.⁴⁸

The format of a written account of a dispute dedicated to Lorenzo allows, so it seems, for the use of a more personal and less formal and academic tone from time to time. Thus, Nicolaus can describe the obstacles he had (*fui impeditus*) regarding the number of arguments he presented against Salviati, reveal his opinion according to which there is a correlation between false conclusions and conclusions which are against the doctrine of Thomas (thus identifying Thomas' doctrine with the truth), and complain to Lorenzo that his

est." See also Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de malo*, q. 1, a. 4 (entitled: *utrum malum convenienter dividatur per culpam et penam*): "... pena secundum quod comparatur ad subiectum, est malum in quantum privat illud aliquo modo; set secundum quod comparatur ad agens qui infert penam, sic interdum habet rationem boni, quando puniens propter iustitiam punit."

45 *Ibid.*: "Quicquid est formaliter falsum est simpliciter falsum. Sed 'Deum esse causam peccati' est formaliter falsum secundum praedictum respondentem; ergo est simpliciter falsum."

46 *Ibid.*, p. 8a: "Quicquid enim est formaliter tale est simpliciter tale; ista est una Maxima omnium scotistarum. Sed 'Deum esse causam peccati' est formaliter falsum secundum eos; ergo est simpliciter falsum." See, e.g., Franciscus de Marchia sive de Esculo, *Commentarius in IV libros sententiarum Petri Lombardi. Quaestiones praeambulae et prologus*, ed. Nazareno Mariani OFM (Rome 2003), p. 150: "... et ita simpliciter simplex est quod est simplex in abstracto ultimata abstractione, quicquid habet formaliter"; p. 351: "... ita quod, omne quod formaliter est in Deo, ultimata abstractione, predicatur de Deo, et per ydemptitatem simpliciter est ipse Deus."

47 *Ibid.*, p. 9a: "Quicquid est valde bonum illud nullomodo est malum nec formaliter nec materialiter, sed omnis dei effectus est valde bonus; ergo nullus effectus Dei est malus saltem quo ad culpam nec materialiter nec formaliter."

48 *Ibid.*: "... valde autem bonum excludit omne malum ex vi significationis."

arguments have not been refuted by Salviati.⁴⁹ But this same format also enables him, immediately in the following paragraph, to present an accurate citation of Thomas Aquinas (*Summa theologiae* 1a2ae, q. 79, a. 2), supporting the distinction between acts and their nature, and thus referring to God as the *per se* and principal cause of every act, but certainly not of a sin, which is defined as an entity (*ens*) and an action (*actio*) which involves some defect. A defect cannot possibly be related to God. Such a defect, argues de Mirabilibus following Thomas, originates from a created cause, and more specifically from the *liberum arbitrium* (free choice), inasmuch as it is separated from the order of the first agent or God.⁵⁰

Two points should be emphasized in our present discussion. First, as we have already seen, in Nicolaus de Mirabilibus' discussion the distinction between acts and their nature is much more emphasized and developed than in Thomas'. The Angelic Doctor only distinguishes between God as the cause of

49 *Ibid.*: "Adductis his rationibus fui impeditus ne plures in medium afferrem; erat enim sicut tunc diximus propositi nostri adducere xxv argumenta contra primam conclusionem. Et demum contra alias instare que vel false essent vel doctrine S. Thome repugnarent. Sed tunc Magnifice Laurenti nullum nostrorum argumentorum vel replicatum vel solutum est a Magistro Georgio..." Regarding the growing authority of Thomas' doctrine see M. Michèle Mulchahey, 'The Dominican *Studium* System and the Universities of Europe in the Thirteenth Century', in Jacqueline Hamesse (ed.), *Manuels, programmes de cours et techniques d'enseignement dans les universités médiévales* (Louvain 1994), pp. 277–324; see e.g., p. 312: "An intellectual bent was also enforced in Dominican *studia generalia* by law early in the fourteenth century, or at least the order attempted to do so. As of 1315 the masters of students in all Dominican *studia*, but especially those in the general houses of study, were told to observe whether lectors and others taught and disputed in accordance with the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas. Offenders who did not heed the correction of the master of students were to be reported to the provincial prior or even to the master general if he could be reached. The personnel of every Dominican *studium generale* thus included a Thomist watchdog, as it were." See also M. Michèle Mulchahey's *First The Bow is Bent in Study: Dominican Education Before 1350* (Toronto 1998), especially pp. 378–384.

50 *Ibid.*, pp. 9b–10a: "Immo ut probat S. Thomas prima secundae, quaestione septuagesimanona, articulo secundo, Deus est etiam causa per se ipsius actus qui est actus peccati; tamen causatio Dei non attingit usque ad peccatum. Et propter hoc Sanctus Thomas nullo modo dicit: Deum esse per se causam peccati vel mali; quia necesse est quod omnis causa per se et principalis alicuius pertingat ad illum effectum, cuius est per se causa. Sed Deus nullo modo pertingit ad peccatum vel ad malum; ideo non potest dici causa per se et principalis ipsius mali ut bene concludunt argumenta nostra superius posita, dicit ergo S. Thomas ut supra. Deus est causa omnis actionis in quantum est actio. Sed peccatum nominat ens et actionem cum quodam defectu. Defectus autem ille est ex causa creata, scilicet ex libero arbitrio in quantum deficit ab ordine primi agentis, scilicet Dei, unde defectus iste non reducitur in Deum sicut in causam, sed in liberum arbitrium."

every act, and sin, in which a defect is involved, and thus it cannot be referred back to God as its cause. According to Nicolaus, the human context determines an act as good or evil, while God is the cause of acts and effects only. Second, by following Thomas' cautious attitude towards free choice or will, Nicolaus is clearly declaring war against the Scotists.⁵¹

By regarding God as *causa peccati materialiter* Scotus and the Scotists are, on the one hand, only playing with words and do not solve any philosophical problem; but on the other hand they are offending the feelings of the believers, claims Nicolaus. Just like Thomas, Scotus regarded God as the cause of the act of sin, not of the evil aspect of this act itself. Thus, the dispute between them is merely terminological (*non sententia sed verbis*).⁵² But having rejected what was exactly the solution offered by Pico and Bianchelli in order to solve the dispute between himself and Salviati, Nicolaus contrasts *materialiter* and *secundum quid* to *absolute*, *secundum se*, and *formaliter*, and so the proposition 'God is not the *per se* and principal cause of sin' is *absolute*, *secundum se*, and

51 For one contemporary Scotist discussion of the will see Salviati's dialogue, which was written during his stay in Urbino some time between 1474 and 1482, and entitled *Fridericus, On the Prince of the Soul's Kingship*, in P. Zvonimir Cornelius Šojat O. F. M., *De voluntate hominis eiusque praeeminentia et dominatione in anima secundum Georgium Dragisic* (c. 1448–1520), *studium historico-doctrinale et editio Tractatus: 'Fridericus, De animae regni principe'* (Rome 1972), pp. 139–219. For a discussion of this text see Chapter Six in this volume. For some detailed discussions of this new psychology in scholastic philosophy during the later part of the thirteenth century and the first decades of the fourteenth century, see the studies of Guido Alliney, 'La contingenza della fruizione beatifica nello sviluppo del pensiero di Duns Scoto', in *Via Scoti. Metodologica ad mentem Joannis Duns Scoti. Atti del Congresso Scotistico Internazionale, Roma 9–11 marzo 1993*, ed. Leonardo Sileo (Rome 1995), vol. 2, pp. 633–660; 'Fra Scoto e Ockham: Giovanni di Reading e il dibattito sulla libertà a Oxford (1310–1320)', in *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 7 (1996), pp. 243–368; 'La ricezione della teoria scotiana della volontà nell'ambiente teologico parigino (1307–1316)', in *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 14 (2005), pp. 339–404; 'The Treatise on the Human Will in the *Collationes oxonienses* Attributed to John Duns Scotus', in *Medioevo* 30 (2005), pp. 209–269; 'Francis of Marchia's Theory of the Will'.

52 Nicolaus de Mirabilibus, *Disputatio nuper facta*, pp. 10a–10b: "... tum quia offendit pias aures Scotus tum sive aliqui Scotiste ut videantur aliquid novi invenisse volunt salvare hunc modum loquendi, scilicet quod Deus sit causa per se et principalis omnis peccati. Non peccati ut peccatum est; quia sic alia re quam verbis esset cum eis disputandum. Sed Deus secundum illos est causa peccati materialiter loquendo, in quantum est per se causa ipsius actus peccati. Et per hoc evadunt argumenta; non tamen solvunt; quia hoc penitus impossibile esset. Differt itaque Scotus a Sancto Doctore in hoc: non sententia sed verbis; cum uterque dicat actum peccati esse a Deo causante illum; sed non malum ipsius actus."

formaliter most true.⁵³ The Dominican is not willing to leave the matter on a purely speculative level. One can sort out the clash between Thomas and Scotus on this question. But we should not be blinded to the practical danger of offending pious ears (*offendere pias aures*) while presenting and defending the proposition ‘God is the *per se* and principal cause of sin’. For this very reason Nicolaus is stressing this point: the believers must know the absolutely true proposition in this case. He is aiming not only at his Franciscan rivals: this is not a dispute which takes place in an empty space or in a purely academic environment, and these are not merely arguments to be refuted; but rather, Nicolaus is also concerned with the practical implications of this dispute as regards believers in general. He is not only a philosopher and a theologian; he is also a friar with responsibility towards a community of believers to whom knowing the truth in matters of faith and distinguishing it from heresy is essential. In fact, it is obvious that this practical aspect is his main motivation in presenting this written account of the dispute. It is for this reason that Nicolaus keeps repeating his conclusions: God cannot possibly be regarded as the *per se* and principal cause of an evil act (either deformed or disordered), but of acts only; every act which originates from God should be regarded as a being, or as something which exists, and thus, of necessity (again, according to the well-known Neoplatonic doctrine) good, and cannot be regarded as evil; God, Who is good, cannot be related to sin or to evil effect.⁵⁴ Nicolaus totally rejects the distinction between material and formal evil with regard to God: God should be regarded as good in every way.⁵⁵ His accusation of heresy pronounced

53 *Ibid.*, p. 10b: “... quin ipse Scotus necessario dicat primam sine comparatione esse veriorē secunda, hec enim scilicet quod Deus non sit per se et principalis causa peccati, est simpliciter et formaliter vera secundum omnes; secunda vero propositio scilicet quod Deus sit per se et principalis causa efficiens peccati nequaquam est vera formaliter sed etiam secundum eos [Scotiste] solum materialiter et secundum quid vera; prima vero est absolute et secundum se et formaliter verissima.”

54 *Ibid.*, p. 11a: “Prima itaque replica nostra et omnia sequentia argumenta superius posita Magnifice Laurenti de necessitate concludunt. Deum non esse causam per se et principalem actus mali sive ut deformis est, ut puta actus fornicationis prout deordinatus est; ergo necesse est quod omnes Scotiste dicant Deum esse causam per se ipsius actus tantum. Omnis autem actus prout est a Deo tanquam a per se et principali causa; necessario ens et res quaedam est et bonus est; ergo actus ut a Deo principaliter est non potest dici malus quoad culpam”; “Non video itaque quod ex hoc quod Deus perfectissime est causa actus peccati; qui bonus est <non> possit dici causa peccati vel mali effectus.”

55 *Ibid.*, p. 11b: “Sed ita est quod omnis effectus et omnis actus per se et principaliter a Deo causatus; necessario est bonus materialiter; ergo impossibile est aliquem effectum Dei ut Dei est esse materialiter malum vel non bonum”; “Sed nullus effectus Dei per se et principaliter ab eo causatus dicitur malus nec formaliter nec materialiter.”

against those who deny this proposition should be understood in the context of a thinker who is not only concerned with the speculative question of evil, but also with the practical implications of this question.

To conclude this section, we can say that there is an interesting correlation between the relative evils originating, according to the Franciscans, from Adam's sin, and Nicolaus' distinction between God as the creator of acts and effects only, and the nature of these acts and effects, which, in the case of evil acts, should be regarded as human products originating from Adam's sin and from the powers or impulses of the post-lapsarian soul. In both cases there is greater human responsibility with regard to evil things or acts. In other words, man is awarded greater freedom in ethics. It is man who creates the context in which all acts, after being created by God, receive their ethical meaning as good or evil. The essential difference is that the Franciscans identify the absolute evil with God, and the relative evils with human beings, while Nicolaus is not willing to accept any relation between God and evil, thus avoiding any discussion of absolute evil, and focusing only on relative evils originated from Adam's sin.

We can emphasize three essential points in Nicolaus de Mirabilibus' discussion. First, we have found two different notions of evil, one Neoplatonic, according to which evil is understood as pure privation and nothingness, and the other, in which evil is subjected to human experience; Nicolaus, without noticing it, is using both notions in his arguments. What we have here is a weak sense of evil which was modified during the dispute and became more concrete and real. Second, the separation between acts and effects on the one hand and their nature as good or evil on the other, enables greater human autonomy and freedom in matters of good and evil. What is good or evil is determined according to the human context in which these acts are performed. As we have seen, the same action can be good in one context and evil in another. There is a tension here, since logical consistency would require the separation of God not only from evil acts, but also from good acts. On a theological level this would, of course, be very problematic, since according to this God is not responsible for good acts. In other words, logical symmetry creates theological asymmetry, but there is nothing new here, since the relation between philosophy (and logic) and theology is determined according to the scholastic formula: *secundum quid idem, simpliciter diversum*. This distinction between acts and their nature fits well with the second notion of evil, the one which is subjected to human experience, and as we shall shortly see it fits well also with Salviati's notion of evil. Third, we should expect to have here a practical concern for the sake of the believers who must know the truth in matters of faith. This practical emphasis and sensitivity is again in accordance with the two previous points: the notion of evil which is subjected to human experience

and greater human autonomy and freedom in ethics. But this practical concern does not seem to be part of Salviati's account, which is focused only on speculative matters.

2.2 Part Two

Salviati's *Septem et septuaginta in opusculo Magistri Nicolai de Mirabilibus reperta mirabilia* which is also dedicated to Lorenzo is clearly a reaction against Nicolaus de Mirabilibus' written account of the public dispute.⁵⁶ Thus, its starting point is focused on the question whether God is absolutely the *per se* cause of evil effect or of evil.⁵⁷ As implied in the title, Salviati's account is divided into seventy seven 'wonders' (*mirabilia*, a word-play on Nicolaus' name), critical points with regard to Nicolaus' discussion. In the dedicatory letter Salviati promises to refute the claim made by Nicolaus, that his own conclusions are opposed to the Christian truth and dangerous to the pious ears of the believers. In fact, the Franciscan argues, Nicolaus' own conclusions which are critically regarded as 'wonders' are offensive to skilled ears; thus, the rhetorical contrast here is between pious ears (*pie aures*) which are not in danger, and skilled ears (*erudite aures*) which are opposed to Nicolaus' conclusions.⁵⁸ Already here we notice the rhetorical and humanistic-oriented nature of Salviati's text, which was no doubt more appealing to Lorenzo and the humanists than Nicolaus' style. This rhetorical device represents also Salviati's different approach: for him this whole disputed question is discussed solely on a speculative or intellectual level, and he is not really concerned about the more practical level: the way in which some of his theses might be understood by the believers beyond the formal academic dispute.

A good example of Salviati's cunning 'academic' style of argumentation is presented in his account of the first dispute held in Santa Reparata. With regard to the first thesis presented by the Franciscans, Salviati claims that

56 Giorgio Benigno Salviati, *Septem et septuaginta in opusculo*, p. 2a: "Enimvero ne inquam et inquit sepius replicetur, ut sermo noster coram haberi videatur ad ipsius opusculi auctor patrem et amicum meum Magistrum Nicolaum de Mirabilibus ex septem castris ordinis sacri predicatorum tota praesens oratio dirigitur."

57 *Ibid.*, pp. 1–2a: "In qua quidem me respondente illud paradoxum. An altissimus Deus effectus mali aut etiam mali absolute per se sit causa satis acute investigatum est."

58 *Ibid.*, p. 2a: "Et quavis universe conclusiones nostre etiam ab his quibus molestiores videbantur veritati Christiane consentanee fuerint iudicate opusculo tamen quodam postmodum edito vertuntur tanquam sacris et piis auribus infeste indubium"; "Enimvero qua eruditibus auribus insueta ibi proponuntur omnia pene dicta, ut etiam suo cognomini alludit, sunt mirabilia."

Nicolaus did not provide a full account of it; such an account should have included not only the conclusion that Adam's sin was not the gravest of all sins, but also the claim that the sin of Eve was greater.⁵⁹ While the Dominican disputant regarded original sin as a whole, so that it could be considered as the cause of evil (and thus the emphasis is on the identification of sin and evil), Salviati moves away from the question of evil and its cause to the question as to whose sin is the gravest, Adam's or Eve's. Bringing into this discussion such a complicated issue which was much discussed in patristic, monastic, and scholastic contexts, as well as in canon law,⁶⁰ without any account or reference and without relating it to the question of evil, seems like an easy and sophistic way to refute the Dominicans, but mainly on rhetorical grounds. Moreover, it represents a tendency to reduce the importance of original sin, or at least to put it in a human context of relative evils: one amongst others. Thus, the sin of Adam cannot be regarded as the cause of *maximum malum*, absolute evil. Human beings, Salviati holds, could have still committed sins or errors even if Adam

59 *Ibid.*, p. 3a: "Ad<d>ucis conclusionem pervenerandum Bachalarium de iugo nostri ordinis truncate. Illa enim sic posita erat. Peccatum Ade non fuit per se et formaliter gravissimum. Immo peccatum Eve fuit eo gravius. Tu autem dicis solum peccatum Ade non est maximum omnium peccatorum."

60 Augustine, *Contra secundam Juliani responsionem imperfectum opus*, XXIII (PL 45, p. 1557); Anselm, *De conceptu virginali et de originali peccato*, IX; Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros sententiarum* II, dist. 31, q. 1, a. 2; *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae, q. 81, a. 5; 2a2ae, q. 163, a. 4. And see the analysis offered by the canonists in *Corpus iuris canonici, prima pars*, dist. VI, c. II: "Tribus enim modis impletur omne peccatum, videlicet suggestionem, delectationem, consensu: suggestio quippe fit per diabolum, delectatio per carnem, consensus per spiritum; quia et primo culpam serpens suggessit, Eva velut caro delectata est, Adam velut spiritus consensit. Et necessaria est magna discretio, ut inter suggestionem delectationem et consensum iudex sui animus presideat. Cum enim malignus spiritus peccatum suggerit in mente, si nulla peccati delectatio sequatur, peccatum omnimodo perpetratum non est; cum vero caro delectari ceperit, tunc peccatum incipit nasci; si autem etiam ad consensionem ex deliberatione descendit, tunc peccatum cognoscitur perfici. In suggestionem igitur peccati semen est, in delectatione fit nutrimentum, in consensu perfectio." These sources suggest that the sin of Adam was in fact greater than Eve's. According to Anselm and Thomas, for instance, it was only through Adam's sin that the original sin was transmitted to the whole of humanity. For the opposite view see, e.g., *Inter pauca problemata de enigmatibus ex tomis canonicis* 210: "Cur non maledixit Adam quomodo serpente? Id est, quomodo minus peccavit, sic minuitur vindicta. Minus enim peccatum Ade quam Evae, ideo non dolet quando seipsum non maledicit, sed suam terram; et minus Eva quam serpens, ideo non egreditur super pectus, vel terram non edit." In any case, it is far from being an obvious or an accepted opinion that Eve's sin was greater than Adam's.

had never sinned.⁶¹ This theological line of argumentation is interesting since, contrary to the Pelagians who reduced the significance of original sin in order to save the human soul from complete corruption, here human beings can sin and err even without original sin; they have the ability to be corrupted, and the obvious faculty in the human soul which is relevant (but not yet mentioned by Salviati) is the will. In other words, things can still go wrong even without original sin. All these evils in human life are absolutely part of every human being from the moment he is born, and they do not depend upon Adam's sin.⁶² It is important for Salviati to distinguish between an essential cause of evil (*causa per se*) and an accidental cause (*causa per accidens*). He is willing to regard Adam's sin only as accidental cause of evil. But, Salviati immediately contends, the accidental cause of one hundred evils is formally less evil than the essential cause of one evil.⁶³ And so we still have to look for the essential cause of evil. We should notice here that, as will be clear shortly, for Salviati the accidental cause is regarded as materially (*materialiter*) the cause, while the essential cause is regarded as formally (*formaliter*) the cause.

Salviati presents a lively account of the last section in the dispute held in Santa Reparata, where we find the Carmelite Angelo Catastini, the Franciscan Luca of Siena, and the Servite Carlo of Faenza, together with Nicolaus, all reacting to this last argument. While Angelo indeed asked what was the *per se* cause of all our evils, Nicolaus, according to Salviati, claimed that every accidental cause can be reduced to the *per se* cause. This of course means that for

61 Salviati, *Septem et septuaginta in opusculo*, pp. 3b–4a: “Nonne fuit data obiectio sive instantia de peccato actuali quod est ut aiunt omnes maximum malum, cuius non fuit nec est peccatum Ade causa; quia etiam eo ablato peccare possumus. Et si Adam nunquam peccasset, filii peccare poterant, posse mori, posse labi, posse errare; hec omnia mala quedam sunt nostra hec tamen haberemus etiam si Adam non peccasset, nam et ipse ea habebat antequam deliquisset.”

62 *Ibid.*, p. 4a: “Omnis boni defectus maxime quod alicui non repugnat, omnis quod imperfectio ut esse minus beatum, minus charitate peditum sunt mala quedam; nam minus bonum habet rationem mali ut ait philosophus tertio ethicorum. Hec tamen etiam si Adam in eo statu in quo conditus fuerat perstitisset in nobis fuissent. Habet ergo omnium malorum absolute; quia non eorum que Angeli sustinent, nec malorum omnium hominum quia non peccati Eve, nec peccati Ade, nec omnium malorum que filii Ade tollant sive habent est causa peccatum Ade . . .”

63 *Ibid.*, p. 4b: “Nego ut peccatum Ade fuerit per se causa omnium malorum nostrorum. Ex hoc maiorem distinxit non per intensionem et extensionem ut tu facis, quod distinctio est metaphysica, sed per se et per accidens ut sit sensus. Illud est maximum peccatum, ex quo evenerunt omnia mala per se. Et sic est maior vera sed minor falsa. Si autem in maiori loco per se posueris, per accidens tunc est falsa maior; quia minus malum formaliter est esse causam centum malorum per accidens, quam unius per se . . .”

him, Adam's sin is both the accidental and the *per se* cause of evil. Salviati will criticize this point, making a sharp distinction between what should be regarded as materially the cause of evil and what is formally the cause. For Luca of Siena the answer is very clear: the *per se* cause is the divine decree. This suggestion was regarded by Nicolaus as a heresy, but then, when Carlo was about to give his account, they were all called to join the religious procession in honour of John the Baptist.⁶⁴

It appears that Salviati presented at Lorenzo's palace nine conclusions that should have been discussed without any disturbance after the *convivium*, but, so the Franciscan complains, Nicolaus presented arguments only against the first among these nine, according to which God is the *per se* and principal cause of every effect, good or evil; thus, He is the *per se* and principal cause of every thing which is called evil.⁶⁵ This conclusion or thesis is then the disputed question which Salviati is going to discuss.

In this section I shall analyse only a few of Salviati's *mirabilia* which can best illustrate the differences of approach and method in the discussion of moral issues, and especially of evil, between him and his Dominican opponent.

According to Salviati, there is a difference between Nicolaus' arguments in the dispute and in his written account of the dispute: the tone in the written version seems much more aggressive and the accusation of heresy is found only there.⁶⁶ The use of such 'mordant words' is again (just like what we have seen in n. 35 and context) an indication of the fact that during a dispute the disputants tend to adopt the more extreme positions.

64 *Ibid.*, pp. 5a–5b: "Magister Angelus sacri ordinis carmelitarum rogabat que esset causa per se omnium malorum nostrorum? Nam et ipse sicut et tua paternitas dicebat: omnis causa per accidens reducitur ad causam per se; tunc magister Lucas Senensis ordinis nostri, vir perfecto egregius, clara voce dixit: causa per se est divinum decretum. Tunc tu me dimisso contra illum ampliorem provinciam sumpturus clamare cepisti. Hoc est hereticum. Supervenit acutissimus theologus magister Carolus illi responsioni tribuens favorem et subito vocati fuimus ad processionem."

65 *Ibid.*, pp. 5b–6a: "Posui novem questiones ut haberemus occasionem conferendi simul absque tumultu in loco secretiori. Post itaque exhuberantissimum illud convivium proposuimus illas conclusiones. Et contra nullam adducte sunt rationes nisi contra primam que fuit eiuscemodi. Omnis effectus sive boni sive mali quodcunque malum sit nomen habens tale. Deus gloriosus est causa per se et principalis. Contra hanc solam et nullam aliam tua potestas arguere cepit."

66 *Ibid.*, p. 6a: "Non decebat inquam de amico tuo heresum extirpatore talia scribere; non decebat negandum veritatis quicquam fingere humanior atque modestior longe arguendo fuisti quam nunc scribendo. Tum certo absolute arguere cepisti, necque istis mordacibus verbis usus es..."

After presenting some contradictions and inconsistencies in Nicolaus' arguments in wonders ten to seventeen,⁶⁷ Salviati, in Wonder Eighteen, argues against Nicolaus' distinction between an act and its nature, using Nicolaus' examples of fornication and manslaughter, but also bringing the case into a concrete legal context:

In the same manner I shall argue against you: either our will is the *per se* cause of an act of manslaughter as an act only, or as a base and evil act; the second possibility is excluded, since, as you say, there is no *per se* cause of privation. Thus, our will is the cause only of an act, and it is in no way the cause of an evil act. See, my good magister, how much your argument is worth.⁶⁸

Such a distinction between an act and its nature removes the responsibility from the agent; seeing evil as privation only, without a *per se* cause, leaves evil acts like manslaughter without a cause, and this is of course impossible in a normal society. We note that this is the first time that Salviati has brought the will into the discussion as the *per se* cause of action by the agent which involves responsibility; we also note a critique of Nicolaus' monolithic approach to evil as pure privation: something is obviously wrong in this philosophical formulation if, while defining evil as pure privation without a *per se* cause, we cannot prosecute a murderer. The implication here is that the free willing agent must be regarded as responsible for the act of manslaughter just as he is responsible for any other evil act.

For Salviati there is a clear logical necessity in the syllogism: God is the cause of that act; that act is evil; thus, God is the cause of evil.⁶⁹ But this does not mean that God is the cause of an act which is deformed, since deformity is an addition and it is not derived from that argument, just as whiteness does not

67 *Ibid.*, pp. 6b–9a.

68 *Ibid.*, p. 9b: "Ego eodem modo arguam contra te. Aut voluntas nostra est *per se* causa actus homicidii ut actus est tantum, aut in quantum deformis et malus; non secundo modo quia privationis nulla est causa *per se*, ut dicis; ergo voluntas nostra est causa tantum actus et nullo modo mali. Vide bone magister quantum illa tua ratio valeat." Salviati has criticized this point concerning pure privation and a *per se* cause in Wonder Ten, pp. 6b–7a.

69 *Ibid.*, p. 10a: "Cum te negante hanc esse veram: Deus est causa mali, sic id probavit. Deus est causa huius actus et hic actus est malus. Ergo est causa mali. Cui rationi quid deficiat videre nequivisti. Illa enim dialectico concedenda est necessario."

necessarily derive from the cause of sweetness.⁷⁰ In the same way, adultery or fornication is an evil act which was created by God, but this does not imply that fornication is evil inside a marriage relation.⁷¹ Thus, according to Salviati, there are good and evil acts, all were caused by God, and the separation between acts and their ethical nature as good and evil is useless. An act of fornication outside a marriage relation is evil; the same act inside a marriage relation is good; God is responsible for both. This brings us closer to the discussion of the nature of evil itself, and the relation between evil and God.

Salviati is clearly representing a totally different approach to evil from the one we have found in Nicolaus de Mirabilibus' account, following mainly Thomas and pseudo-Dionysius. Our Franciscan friar represents the Scotist psychology according to which one can know what is good but still act badly, being fully aware of his evil actions. He gives a clear example for this in Wonder Twenty-Three, while criticizing Nicolaus' claim (cited in n. 36) that God cannot be the cause of evil, since He Himself forbids it. Theology teaches us exactly the opposite, claims Salviati, just as physicians forbid others to eat many things which they themselves tend to eat. There is no necessity that God would not do exactly what He forbids us to do. On the one hand God does anything we would like, but on the other, there are some things which He forbids us to do; thus God does what he forbids us.⁷² In the first agreement (*conventio*) between man and God, according to Salviati, the emphasis is on the power of the human will. God does not forbid us in principle to do things, claims the Franciscan, but He only forbids us to do what is in principle in our power. Since deformity is in our power, not in principle but rather accidentally, such an evil act which causes

70 *Ibid.*, p. 10a: "Nec alia tua consequentia valet. Si Deus est per se causa ipsius mali. Ergo est causa actus prout est deformis. Sicut non sequitur hoc est per se causa dulcis. Ergo est per se causa dulcis ut album est."

71 *Ibid.*, p. 11a: "Quamvis ergo actus adulterii qui est a Deo sit malus non dico ut in quantum est a Deo sit malus, non tamen sequitur; ergo ille actus in matrimonio est malus. Falsum quoque est ut actus fornicationis quem actum solummodo et non malitiam eius Deus producit non sit malus."

72 *Ibid.*, p. 11b: "Quanti momenti in Theologia sit ista consequentia tua queso animadverte. Deus prohibet hoc, ergo non facit. Multa vetant medici edere, que ipsi etiam sic dispositi devorant, hec ioco. Sed ad rem quamvis Deus gloriosus cuncta recte disponat, non tamen opus est ut si mihi quippiam prohibuerit illud non faciat. Nam prima eius conventio nobiscum est ut quicquid voverimus conproducat. Secunda ut hec vel illa non faciamus. Dato autem quod velimus concurrat ex primo pacto. Et ita que nobis prohibet, nobiscum agit."

deformity is in our power.⁷³ While replying to Carlo of Faenza Salviati makes it clear that God forbids us to do those acts which cause turpitude. But still, such a prohibition does not annul our freedom which was given to us by God and of which we are not deprived.⁷⁴ This means that God Himself created for us the possibility of doing evil acts by giving us freedom. While being able to choose between good and evil acts, man makes himself worthy of salvation or of damnation at the very first stage *in via*. And this ability of making the first step towards good or evil was given to us by God without interfering in our freedom of choice. This is how absolute divine determination, on the one hand, and absolute human freedom on the other, can live together in Salviati's moral theology.

Salviati stresses the fact that although God hates impiety and the act upon which impiety is based, nevertheless it was God Who created the possibility of such impious acts of sin,⁷⁵ and thus:

For it is certain that God does not want the act of sin, but He produces it together with us if we so wish.⁷⁶

The human will is described here as the driving force in the creation of the possibility of an act of sin. Keeping the freedom which was given to man by God also means that God participates in creating such a possibility.

Salviati is explicitly criticizing Nicolaus' one and only notion of evil, according to which evil does not exist. For him evil has many different and concrete realizations.⁷⁷ It is a real being created by God and not just an empty

73 *Ibid.*, p. 12a: "Praeterea Deus nil nobis prohibet principaliter, nisi quod principaliter est in nostra potestate. Sed deformitas illa non est in nostra potestate nisi per accidens. Ex eo quia actus ille est in nostra potestate."

74 *Ibid.*, pp. 12a–12b: "Sicut in illa disputatione declaravi dum responderem egregio Theologo Magistro Carolo Faentino, Sacri ordinis Servorum matris Dei marie. Deus ergo prohibet illos actus quos turpitudine consequitur. Et tamen prohibitione non obstante ne nos libertate spoliaret eos ipsos nobiscum producit."

75 *Ibid.*, pp. 15a–15b: "Ex quo innuitur quod non solum Deus odit impietatem quam non facit, sed etiam ipsum actum in quo fundatur impietas. Immo ipsum hominem dicit enim copulative odit impium et impietatem suam. Et tamen hec fundamenta Deus producit. Ergo que odio habet facit."

76 *Ibid.*, p. 15b: "Nam certum est Deum nolle actum peccati quem tamen si voluerimus nobiscum producit."

77 *Ibid.*, p. 22b: "Tu ergo non cogitas nisi de uno malo semper. Non esse certo malum est. Et multa Deus intendit non esse monstrum esse malum est quod tamen intendit."

term,⁷⁸ and it contains a positive element and not only privation or negation of pleasure.⁷⁹

The Franciscan delicately sets the exact relation between God and evil:

But we do not say: God intends [to do] evil, but rather [God] causes evil, [God] creates evil. Therefore, the first proposition is not true. Still I concede that God intends to produce evil, not by declaring that act which is evil.⁸⁰

Salviati emphasizes the aspect of action in God-evil relation: *Deus facit, creat, intendit producere malum*, while reducing the role of intention, through which God Himself might seem to be evil. But as we have seen, he rejects the possibility of separating acts from their ethical nature: God is the creator of acts which are evil. Nevertheless, in causing evil, God is not holding evil as a sin, and while willing to cause evil, it does not follow that He wants sin. God can cause deformity (which is the outcome of an evil act) not as fault but rather as a punishment.⁸¹

In order not to identify God with evil it is important for Salviati to see God as determining the cause or the mode of causality of an evil effect, rather than as specifying this particular act of malice.⁸² It is also important for him to show

78 *Ibid.*, p. 17b: "Deus est causa mali, non stat ipsum malum pro illa voce; quia illa vere creatura Dei est."

79 *Ibid.*, p. 20b: "Quod malum non solum videtur privatio vel negatio voluptatis, sed res positiva." This is clearly contrasted to Thomas' *Quaestiones disputatae de malo*, q. 1, a. 2: "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod Dionisius non intendit quod malum non sit in existenti sicut privatio in subiecto, set quod sicut non est aliquid per se existens, ita non est aliquid positive in subiecto existens." And see also n. 25 above for more sources.

80 *Ibid.*, p. 23a: "Nos autem non dicimus: Deus intendit malum; sed facit malum, creat malum. Non ergo est vera illa maior. Concedo tamen quod Deus intendit producere malum, non appellando; quia illum actum qui malus."

81 *Ibid.*, p. 24a: "Consequentia tali uteris. Si Deus vellet per se actum malum ut malus est. Ergo Deus peccaret. Arguis ut sepe facis: a superiori affirmative ad inferius. Nam malum est superior ad peccatum. Non itaque sequitur. Vult malum, ergo vult peccatum"; *ibid.*, p. 24b: "Deus etiam posset illam difformitatem producere ut penam non ut culpam." This standard view is discussed in n. 44 and context.

82 *Ibid.*, p. 25a: "... Deum esse per se causam effectus mali, etiam malitia de meritoria; prout per se determinat causam sive modum causandi, non autem prout specificat ipsam eiusmodi malitiam, ut sit sensus."

that God is related to evil as an effect and not as a defect.⁸³ This point enables the Franciscan to take another step away from Nicolaus' notion of evil and develop a more complicated notion, according to which evil should not be regarded simply as a defect, but rather as something which is contrary to the good, and thus, it is a positive being, just like a vice, a bad act, pain, and anything which is troublesome and annoying to the appetitive faculty.⁸⁴ Here Salvati is going beyond the philosophical formula presented by his Dominican rival and discussing a more concrete and human notion of evil. Salvati also rejects the connection between an evil effect and deformity by using a biblical case: according to him, we can in fact imagine an evil effect without deformity. The example given here is Job, who suffered from evil caused by pains which was not deformed.⁸⁵

Salvati does not accept the way Nicolaus interprets the biblical phrase *valde bona* (Genesis 1, 31). As we have seen,⁸⁶ according to the Dominican this phrase is referring to everything which was created by God. The Franciscan, on the other hand, claims that this phrase should be taken to refer not to every single thing in the world, but rather to the general structure of single parts of the world which is regarded as the best.⁸⁷ The reference to Peter Lombard (*Sentences* I, XLVI, 5 and II, XV, 9), places evil as well in the cosmic picture: in this best structure created by God even evil is well ordained.⁸⁸ The Franciscan points out that, *pace* his Dominican rival, we must distinguish between absolute and relative good, and likewise between absolute and relative evil. Furthermore, with regard to relative good and evil, we cannot 'purify'

83 *Ibid.*, p. 26a: "Sed mihi sat est ut [Deus] habeat ordinem ad malum quod est effectus, non defectus."

84 *Ibid.*, pp. 29a–29b: "Nec videtur verum ut malum essentialiter dicat defectum; cum aliquod malum per philosophum opponatur bono contrarie per consequens erit ens positivum, ut vitium et actus vitiosus, et dolor, omneque appetitui inconveniens et molestum."

85 *Ibid.*, p. 35a: "Falsum quoque est ut impossibile sit imaginari effectum malum sine difformitate. Quia malum dolorum quod patiebatur Iob non erat difforme."

86 See n. 47 and context.

87 Salvati, *Septem et septuaginta in opusculo*, p. 35b: "Vidit Deus cuncta quod fecerat et erant valde bona; hunc autem passum doctores exponunt de ordine partium huius universi quem dicunt optimum, non autem ut unaqueque res sit optima. Unde et sacra scriptura aiunt de singulis dicit. Vidit Deus quod esset bonum de omnibus vero; quod erant valde bona."

88 *Ibid.*, p. 35b: "Unde et Magister sic dicit. Ex omnibus consistit universitatis admirabilis pulcritudo: in qua etiam illud quod malum dicitur bene ordinatum est."

good of evil and describe everything in the world which was created by God as absolutely good, totally neglecting the presence of evil. The best fly is a bad and imperfect sense-object, one man is better than another, and thus, something which is less good has its share of evil.⁸⁹ This is again a more concrete and realistic notion of evil, the one we come across in our daily life. Salviati continues this same line of argumentation, refuting de Mirabilibus on a philological ground (thus paying tribute to the humanist fashion), and then, using the authority of Thomas against the Thomist, again making a case for a relative notion of good and evil: since all created creatures are composed of actuality and potentiality, they contain both perfection and imperfection, and thus they contain also the principle of evil. If the phrase *valde bona* can be referred to them, it cannot totally exclude evil or defect. Nicolaus is being made to choose between rejecting either the opinion of Thomas or the possibility of excluding *omne malum* from *valde bonum*.⁹⁰

What we have here is a notion of evil which cannot be totally identified with defect or deformity since it contains also other aspects, like pains, for instance, on the one hand, and a relative notion of good and evil, which cannot be separated from one another, on the other. It is important to notice that this kind of relativity means for Salviati only the fact that good and evil are not divorced from one another. In the different degrees of good and evil there is more (good or evil) and less (good or evil). It does not mean that for Salviati there are no absolute good and absolute evil; there are, and both originated from God's will. But what is unique to the act of the will is that the same act can be regarded as

89 *Ibid.*, pp. 35b–36a: “Taceo hic de prima huius ratiocinationis quam dicis. Quicquid est valde bonum, nullo modo est malum. Nam ut capis valde bonum absolute ut est Deus, tunc nil ad bonum aut secundum quid et ut tale ens; tunc est falsa. Quia optima musca est malum sensibile et imperfectum, homo quoque unus est melior altero. Minus autem bonum habet rationem mali.”

90 *Ibid.*, pp. 36a–36b: “Valde bonum excludit omne malum ex vi significationis. Illud non est verum nisi superlativus ille sumatur absolute et secundum entitatem. Nam omnis creatura etiam secundum Thomam [*Scriptum super libros sententiarum* I, dist. 8, q. 3, a. 2] est composita ex actu et potentia. Et ita ex perfecto et imperfecto. Imperfectum vero dicit rationem mali. Aut ergo nulla creatura est valde bona. Et ita contra te. Aut si omnis vel aliqua sit valde bona. Ergo aut ab eo excluditur omne malum et omnis defectus. Et erit contra Thomam; aut erit valde bona cum aliquo defectu et malo et per consequens non excludit omne malum. Quod est iterum contra te. Ex his nil poteris eligere; quin contra te semper sequatur.” A critique of de Mirabilibus' Latin style can be found in p. 44b: “Non miror hic elegantiam latine lingue; quia capis omnis per omnes in casu nominativo, quod alii faciunt in acusativo.”

good under one consideration and evil under another consideration.⁹¹ Thus, yet another implication is that the sharp dichotomy between good and evil as suggested by de Mirabilibus, according to which it is impossible that the evil could originate from, or be connected in any way to, the good, must be rejected since, Salviati argues, who else is directly responsible for all the evils which have been brought upon humanity as a punishment for original sin except God, the absolute good? In that way the proposition 'God is the cause of all evil' must be true.⁹² As in the two other biblical cases we have just discussed, the example of Job's sufferings and the phrase *valde bona*, also here we see how the biblical verses (Genesis 3, 16–19) are used by our Franciscan disputant in order to promote a more concrete and human notion of evil.

Salviati is also willing to relate God to sin (both to the act and to the defect), disagreeing with Nicolaus regarding the interpretation of Thomas: according to him God is neither the cause of such a defect nor of that act and defect at once, but rather, He is the cause of that act 'under' defect (*illius actus sub defectu*).⁹³ Taken formally (*formaliter*), God is not the cause of sin, but this does not mean that taken in general (*communiter*) God cannot be related to sin. Such an opinion should not offend the pious ears of Christians but only the impious ears of the Pharisees.⁹⁴ Moreover, the Franciscan contends that the proposition 'God is the cause of sin' is verifiable (*verificabilis*) in many ways, and that it is not opposed to Scripture or to the Church's decrees.⁹⁵ The term

91 *Ibid.*, p. 41b: "Nonne idem actus voluntatis contrarius percepto est bonus respectu eiusdem voluntatis simul ac malus? Et quare? Quia bonus uno modo, malus vero alio."

92 *Ibid.*, pp. 37a–37b: "Quis enim amovit ab Adam iustitiam originalem? Quis expulit eum de paradyso voluptatis? Quis dixit in sudore vultus tui vesceris pane tuo? Et iterum maledicta terra in opere tuo? Et mulieri in dolore paries filios tuos, quis dixit nisi Deus? Preterea si Deus sit causa omnis actus vel sibi et omnis malitia fundetur in aliquo subiecto hec propositio est vera. Deus est causa omnis mali."

93 *Ibid.*, pp. 38a–38b: "Ex quo colligitur quod Deus non est causa talis defectus, nec etiam illius actus et defectus simul; sed bene illius actus sub defectu. Falso ergo inducis ex mente Beati Thome. Deum nullo modo esse per se causam peccati; sed bene Deum non esse causam ullo modo peccati per se formaliter sumpti. Ut tibi etiam in discrepatione illa dicebamus. Falsum etiam est quod Deus vel causatio dei nullo modo pertingat ad peccatum; sic intelligendo ut peccatum nullo modo sumptum nec pro actu nec pro defectu sit a Deo."

94 *Ibid.*, p. 38b: "Accipiendo vero ut nullo modo, idest per se nec per accidens, Deus attingat peccatum formaliter est vera; ut communiter dicitur. Falsum etiam est, ut contradictio sit, Deum esse per se causam alicuius peccati eo modo. Nec illud offendit pias Christiani aures, sed Pharisei impias."

95 *Ibid.*, p. 39b: "Ego namque hoc unum dixi: hanc propositionem, Deus est causa peccati, multis esse modis verificabilem. Neque oppositum habemus ex sacris litteris aut ecclesiastica sanctione."

verificabilis used here by Salviati is interesting, since it is not classical, and not very often used in medieval Latin; thus it can give us some indication regarding Salviati's possible sources. We can find this term, for instance, in William of Ockham's *Summa logicae*, at the beginning of part two, in the discussion of the division of propositions in general.⁹⁶ Salviati devoted one book to logic, *In logicam introductorium*, and he might have been introduced to the logic of William of Ockham via his teacher, the English Scotist John Foxoles.⁹⁷ But we should notice that Salviati uses *verificabilis* in a more general and less technical philosophical context in comparison with William, the context of a proposition or an opinion which is verifiable in an ethical or a theological discussion.

In Wonder Seventy-One, Salviati again criticizes the sharp dichotomy, in Nicolaus' discussion, between good and evil, derived from his strict notion of evil. This is how he presents Nicolaus' argument:

Since you demonstrate your view thus: a being which materially exists is also a thing, and consequentially, it is good; thus, it is not evil. Since to be materially good and to be materially evil are opposites.⁹⁸

It seems as if nothing can be wrong in this argument. But Salviati argues that we must distinguish between two different things: natural good on the one hand, and evil behaviour on the other; and these two can exist together without contradiction.⁹⁹ As an example we can think of a very good dress in matters of its quality, which is, according to the moral codes of the fifteenth

96 William of Ockham, *Summa logicae* II, 1: "Circa quod est sciendum quod propositio dicitur modalis propter modum additum in propositione. Sed non quicumque modus sufficit ad faciendum propositionem modalem, sed oportet quod sit modus praedicabilis de tota propositione, et ideo proprie dicitur 'modus propositionis' tamquam verificabilis de ipsamet propositione. Et a tali modo vel adverbio talis praedicabilis, si adverbium habeat, vel verbo dicitur propositio modalis."

97 On Salviati's book on logic see Šojat, *De voluntate hominis*, p. 57; on his scholastic sources, and his relations with Foxoles see Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione*, p. 23; On Foxoles see e.g., with further references, Girard J. Etzkorn, 'John Foxal, O.F.M.: His Life and Writings', in *Franciscan Studies* 49 (1989), pp. 17–24; Lorenzo Di Fonzo, 'Il minorita inglese Giovanni Foxholes. Maestro scotista e arcivescovo (ca. 1415–1475)', in *Miscellanea Francescana* 99/ I–II (1999), pp. 320–346. One may remark here that much more detailed research is yet needed with regard to Salviati's sources, his work on logic, and his relations with Foxoles.

98 Salviati, *Septem et septuaginta in opusculo*, p. 42b: "Quod probas: quia materialiter est ens et res quedam et per consequens bonus, ergo non malus; cum materialiter esse bonum et materialiter esse malum sint contraria."

99 *Ibid.*, p. 43a: "Nec tamen sequitur ut ille effectus non sit quandoque malus, hoc est non sit vestitus indumento malitiae moralis et demeritorie. Nam hec duo. Videlicet bonum naturale et malum moris stant simul et non sunt contraria."

century, morally bad.¹⁰⁰ The expression ‘an effect which at some time would be dressed with a garment of evil’ (*effectus quandoque sit vestitus indumento malitiae*) reflects Salviati’s flexible notion of evil, a notion which is most relevant to moral teachings. Evil here is neither nothingness nor is it completely divorced from the good. It is rather an essential part of human actions and of human life. What is needed, claims Salviati, is that the good would be the substrate of evil, just as we read in Peter Lombard’s *Sentences*, where the good is regarded as the cause of evil.¹⁰¹ But while in Peter Lombard we find a more restricted formulation:

Therefore, the first source and cause of sin was good; and the second [was] evil which originated from the good.¹⁰²

Salviati’s formulation of this idea is more general and philosophical:

Therefore, evils originate from goods, and are restored to goods; but these goods which are joined to such badness are initially called evils in such a manner, that they would still not stop being goods.¹⁰³

We find here again the rejection of the dichotomy between good and evil as presented by Nicolaus. Salviati suggests a much more flexible notion of the relations between goods and evils. Goods never stop being goods; temporally, and we may say accidentally, we may call them evils, but essentially they are always good. It is important to notice the presence of ‘such badness’ (*talis malitia*), thanks to which these goods can be regarded as evils. The use of the plural form ‘goods’ and ‘evils’ emphasizes the fact that Salviati deals here with concrete and relative good and evil acts and objects, as contrasted to the more abstract and absolute notions of good and evil that we have found in Nicolaus’ account. But what exactly does it mean that the goods never stop being goods? It brings us again to the distinction between “materially” and “formally”:

¹⁰⁰ On this see Thomas M. Izbicki, ‘The Origins of the *De ornatu mulierum* of Antoninus of Florence’, in *Modern Language Notes* 119 Supplement (2004), pp. 142–161.

¹⁰¹ Salviati, *Septem et septuaginta in opusculo*, p. 43a: “Opus namque est ut bonum sit subiectum mali, sicut bonum est causa mali secundum M. Sententiarum [I, XLVI, 7, 2; II, XXXIV, 3]. Nihil enim est undique malum.”

¹⁰² Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, II, XXXIV, 3: “Prima igitur origo et causa peccati bonum fuit; et secunda, malum quod ortum est ex bono.”

¹⁰³ Salviati, *Septem et septuaginta in opusculo*, p. 43a: “Mala ergo ex bonis orta sunt, et in bonis reponuntur; sed illa bona tali malitia adiuncta incipiunt sic dici mala, ut tamen non desinant esse bona.”

materially speaking, that is, taken from the point of view of language, goods jointed to badness can be called evils, but formally speaking, that is, taken from the point of view of their essence, they continue to be goods. This is why Salviati immediately moves on to present a direct critique of Nicolaus' arguments concerning the terms 'materially' (*materialiter*) and 'formally' (*formaliter*) with regard to God's effect. It has been wrongly argued, claims the Franciscan, since we first should distinguish between good and evil effects. A good effect would be God's effect, either with regard to its subject or with regard to its form. But an evil effect like adultery cannot be regarded simply as God's effect, but only materially and in general terms.¹⁰⁴ And thus Salviati attacks his Dominican rival:

And you hold it improperly, as it was claimed that God's effect is both formally and materially good, while [in fact] some effect would not be formally of God, but only materially. Furthermore, adultery is not formally an evil effect, but rather badness itself. And that thing itself when it has been fundamentally understood is formally evil, as long as this badness is formally inherent in it.¹⁰⁵

Salviati is dealing here in all seriousness with the problem of the existence of both God and evil in the world. God can be regarded only materially as the origin of all effects, that is, both good and evil effects. Thus, an evil effect like adultery is indeed evil, but it can be related to God only materially. In this way we can explain the existence of effects which are materially, i.e., in our language, evil, although they are connected to God. Formally speaking, adultery is not an evil effect, but only the badness inherent in it.

Thus, we can say that Salviati is moving from a more abstract and absolute concept of evil (*malum*) which is found, among many others, in Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas—who, as we have seen, are being followed by Nicolaus de Mirabilibus—via a notion of relative evils (*mala*), towards a final notion of specific badness (*malitia*), a more concrete concept which is part of human life and experience, and thus has real existence and effect; but its effect should be

104 *Ibid.*: "Incongrue quoque dicitur effectus Dei materialiter et formaliter, nam quamvis effectus bonus sit dei effectus sive per subiecto sive per forma accipiat; non tamen effectus malus ut adulterium est effectus Dei nisi materialiter ut communiter dicitur."

105 *Ibid.*: "Et tu tenes inepte igitur dicitur effectum Dei et formaliter et materialiter esse bonum, cum aliquis effectus formaliter non sit Dei, sed solum materialiter. Deinde adulterium formaliter non est effectus malus sed ipsa malitia. Et ipsum fundamentaliter sumptum est malum formaliter, illa malitia formaliter sibi inherente."

regarded as only materially (*materialiter*) effecting, that is, on an external or accidental level, and not on the essential level of human concerns.

Salviati points out some problems in Nicolaus' syllogism concerning the separation between acts and their ethical nature, and what is formally and materially good or evil. Reading this critique, we encounter again Salviati's flexible notion of evil. Here is Nicolaus' 'problematic' syllogism as presented by Salviati: this act of fornication principally originates from God as an act only; this act which is the same in number, since it is principally originated from God, is formally and materially good; thus, this act, since it is principally originated from God is not evil, either materially or formally.¹⁰⁶ This syllogism is not valid, claims Salviati, since, first, the conclusion is already present in the second proposition ('this act is materially and formally good'), while it should have been stated directly that materially and formally good originates principally from God;¹⁰⁷ second, it is not valid to conclude that since something is good, thus it is not evil.¹⁰⁸ The Franciscan rather contends that

For some good is evil. And every evil is some good or is in some way good.¹⁰⁹

This argument again rejects the black and white dichotomy between good and evil, suggesting a more flexible and, to some extent, dynamic approach in matters of morality, where human concerns are at stake and where in so many cases such a sharp dichotomy is neither helpful nor relevant. The third argument against Nicolaus' syllogism concerns the fact that while distinguishing, on the one hand, between acts and their nature as good or evil, Nicolaus reintroduces goodness through the back door, by relating the act to God, and God

106 *Ibid.*, pp. 43a–43b: "Syllogismo expositorio valde confuse uteris. Iste actus puta fornicionis prout actus tantum est principaliter a Deo. Et iste idem numero actus prout est principaliter a Deo est bonus et formaliter et materialiter. Ergo iste actus prout principaliter est a Deo non est malus nec materialiter nec formaliter."

107 *Ibid.*, p. 43b: "Sed iste non est syllogismus validus quem comes contra te induxit. Tu enim in conclusione ponis medium terminum contra omnem artem; sic brevi arguendo: hic actus est principaliter a Deo. Et hic actus est bonus materialiter et formaliter; ergo hic actus non est malus nec materialiter nec formaliter. Debueras sic inferre directe. Ergo bonum materialiter et formaliter est a Deo principaliter; vel e converso indirecte."

108 *Ibid.*: "Secundo peccas qua medio termino in conclusione nullum extremorum unis ut patet. Dicere enim debueras. Ergo iste actus est bonus materialiter et formaliter. Nec sequitur est bonus, ergo non est malus."

109 *Ibid.*: "Nam aliquod bonum est malum. Et omne malum est aliquod bonum sive aliquomodo bonum."

to goodness on the other hand.¹¹⁰ We have already pointed out this inconsistency and tension between logic and theology in Nicolaus' arguments. In the fourth argument of Salviati we find again his notion of *malitia moris*, the concrete notion of evil:

You err fourthly when you say that an act of fornication, since it [originates] from God, is both formally and materially good. For either adultery originates formally from God, and thus, it is against what you have just said, or that it is only materially. Therefore, in this way [adultery] is only naturally good, although bad moral behaviour (*malitia moris*) is then attached to it.¹¹¹

We can see here another example of the flexibility of Salviati's notion of good and evil: according to the Franciscan, there is no contradiction in relating what is regarded as naturally good (*bonum naturaliter*) to bad behaviour or badness in moral behaviour (*malitia moris*). Adultery is thus naturally good and morally bad, and we find here again (just as we have seen in n. 99: *bonum naturale et malum moris stant simul et non sunt contraria*) the distinction (without contradiction), between nature and moral behaviour; but Salviati is not completely honest with regard to Nicolaus when he immediately moves from the act of fornication (in which Nicolaus focuses on the act alone) to adultery, which includes both the act and its ethical significance, thus eschewing the distinction between an act itself and its nature as good or evil. Finally, Salviati criticizes Nicolaus' conclusion that it is impossible to regard God as the principal cause of sin, and argues that it is sometimes (*aliquando*) possible, when we add the adverb materially (*materialiter*).¹¹²

A fuller account is given by Salviati in the next wonder, where he first exposes a contradiction in Nicolaus' argument: if every act, because it is subject to a divine act, should be both materially and formally good, what are we going to do with all evil acts? Say that those acts are not subject to divine

110 *Ibid.*: "Peccas tertio implicando, quando dicis, prout actus tantum est a Deo, et prout est a Deo est bonus. Cum enim dicis actus tantum excludis bonitatem."

111 *Ibid.*, pp. 43b–44a: "Peccas quarto quia actum fornicationis prout est a Deo dicis et formaliter et materialiter bonum. Nam aut est formaliter a Deo adulterium, et sic contra te, aut solum materialiter. Ergo illo modo solum est bonum naturaliter, cui tamen iuncta est malitia moris."

112 *Ibid.*, p. 44a: "Et concludis. Ergo nullo modo potest dici ut deus sit principalis causa peccati. Quamvis tali locutione ne ipse quidem sim usus, ut Deus sit principalis causa peccati. Dico tamen quod hec aliquando est vera. Deus est per se principalis causa peccati, quia peccati materialiter sumpti."

causality?¹¹³ Even in this critique we notice Salviati's concrete notion of evil: evil exists in the world, we face evil acts almost every day, so we need a better explanation:

Every act, as it originates from God, is good according to the goodness of its own nature. The same goes [with regard to every act which originates] from our will. Then, every act, inasmuch as it originates from God is not morally and meritoriously good. Thirdly, an act of adultery of which God, formally understood, is the *per se* cause is not a good [act], but rather it would be whatever kind of form itself, I do not care which, of which evil is said to be a substrate.¹¹⁴

Thus, according to Salviati, every act should be regarded as good or evil according to its own nature and not according to its cause, which is God. In the same way, having their origin from God, acts cannot be regarded as morally and meritoriously good, simply by the fact that they have originated from God. And thus an evil act like adultery, although caused by God, should be regarded formally only as evil. In this account Salviati manages to preserve divine causality with regard to every act on the one hand, and to leave room for a substantial element of freedom and autonomy in the field of ethics and human actions, and with regard to matters of good and evil, on the other hand.

Salviati is very critical with regard to the way de Mirabilibus used the adverb *materialiter* in his discussion, thus connecting it to moral judgment. While considering the act of fornication materially, it has no 'denomination' of evil, although it is evil; and so, according to the Franciscan, if you take it materially, this means that you deprive it of any 'denomination', and thus it is neither good nor evil.¹¹⁵ Once again, the too rigid notion of evil found in Nicolaus' discussion is criticized by Salviati also with regard to *materialiter*, as we can see in the next critical point. According to Nicolaus' argument as represented by Salviati, God cannot be the principal cause of something inasmuch as it is not under His

113 *Ibid.*: "... quamvis omnis actus prout subest actioni divine sit bonus et materialiter et formaliter; tamen multi sunt mali, non ut subsunt causationi divine."

114 *Ibid.*, pp. 44a–44b: "Omnis actus ut a Deo est, bonus est bonitate nature sue. Sic etiam ut a voluntate nostra est. Deinde. Omnis actus etiam prout est a Deo non est bonus moraliter et meritorie. Tertio actus adulterii cuius actus per se est causa Deus formaliter sumptus non est bonus, sed est ipsa forma qualiscumque sit, non curo, qua subiectum dicitur malum."

115 *Ibid.*, p. 45a: "Deinde actus fornicationis materialiter non est malum denominans, sed ille est malus: quia denominatus a malitia. Aut capis actum illum materialiter, hoc est secludendo ab ipso omnem denominationem et sic nec est bonus nec malus."

divine causation, and so, it is impossible to say that God would materially be the principal cause of sin. But this conclusion, contends the Franciscan, stands upon the proposition 'sin taken materially is not *per se* under divine causality', which is false. But the problem is that according to Nicolaus everything which is under divine causality is *per se* good.¹¹⁶ Thus, by strictly relating existence to goodness we lose again the concrete notion of sin in theology and of evil in ethics. Both sin and evil are, according to Salviati, subject to divine causality and so they do have real and concrete existence.

In his final remarks Salviati emphasizes again the fact that human will (either good, evil, or neither), having been created by God, cannot be regarded as the *per se* cause of evil, but only God should be regarded as such a cause. God is the permitting cause (*causa permissiva*) of such an evil will, while original sin is the reason why the will became evil in the first place.¹¹⁷ While dealing once again with arguments raised by Carlo of Faenza, Salviati mentions the classical Scotist distinction between nature and will. He declares that punishments (*poene*) belong to us human beings by nature, and thus they are not the result of Adam's sin. For this reason the will should be excluded from this discussion, since it is impossible that the same effect would be produced by two causes which have an opposed way or mode of producing: nature and the will.¹¹⁸ Moreover, neither should the conflict between sensitive nature in man

116 *Ibid.*, pp. 45a–45b: "Deus non potest esse principalis causa rei prout sue causationi non subest. Ergo impossibile est quod Deus sit principalis causa peccati etiam materialiter dicti. Que consequentia si quid valet tenet virtute huius propositionis. Peccatum materialiter non subest divine causationi per se que falsa est. Sed videris id probasse, quia omne quod subest divine causationi per se bonum est. Concedo bonitate entis. Immo omne quod per se fit a quocumque fiat bonum est eo pacto."

117 *Ibid.*, p. 47a: "Dixi quoque Deum fuisse causam permissivam illius male voluntatis. Taceo quod mala voluntas non fuit causa peccati sed ipso peccato facta est mala. Secus abiremus in infinitum. Voluntas enim bona vel neutra moraliter est causa primi mali, ipsam dominantis."

118 *Ibid.*, p. 48b: "Poene insunt nobis a natura; ergo non ratione peccati Ade. Consequentia bona. Quia impossibile est eundem effectum provenire a duabus causis habentibus oppositum modum principiandi ut sunt natura et voluntas." The distinction between nature and will, and some related terms like necessity, contingency, and freedom, are discussed in John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, dist. 1, p. 2, q. 2; see e.g., P. C. Balić (ed.), *Ioannis Duns Scoti opera omnia*, vol. 2 (Vatican City 1950), p. 72: "Si aliter instetur quod maior est vera de illis quae similem necessitatem habent respectu principaliter intenti et respectu eorum quae sunt necessaria ad illud cuius sunt agentia mere naturalia, quae in toto processu usque ad ultimum intentum agunt mere ex necessitate naturali—voluntas autem alio modo respicit finem in quo est omnis bonitas, et ideo necessario, et aliter quodcumque aliud ens in quo est defectus boni, et ideo quodcumque aliud respicit contingenter . . ." On

and the judgment of his reason be related to original sin, but rather to human nature itself as such; Salviati's explanation contains an analogy between this conflict in man's soul and the conflict in the movement of inferior and superior orbits.¹¹⁹ Once again we find that Salviati is a representative of the complicated moral psychology of late scholastic thinking, in which a more nuanced account is given of human nature, in terms of internal powers or impulses (represented here by the movement of orbits), rather than a mere general corruption of the human soul caused by original sin.

While considering the view (which can be found, for instance, in Thomas Aquinas) of the act of sin, which includes two elements, an act and a deformity, either mixed together or found separately in specific sins, we witness once again Salviati's own interesting moral psychology: after raising some difficulties regarding this view and the possibility of distinguishing between deformity which is based upon a negation of act, evil will and an internal act, Salviati contends that it is enough to maintain that it is possible to commit a sin of omission without any internal or external act; but instead of deformity, our Franciscan thinker describes the state of sinning as a temporary state, just like that of those who are asleep, drunk, or acting rashly.¹²⁰ Thus, he tacitly rejects

these complicated issues in Scotus and their reception in the first decades of the fourteenth century see Alliney, 'La ricezione della teoria scotiana,' especially pp. 341–345.

119 *Ibid.*, p. 49a: "Nunc autem in maiori mundo inferiores orbes motu contrario moventur orbi superiori ut patet primo de celo et mundo. Ergo pari ratione sensitiva hominis natura movetur contra iudicium rationis. Cum ergo rebellio talis maxime dicatur ob peccatum accidisse; que tamen natura homini id est." Salviati is reflecting here the opening lines of John Pecham's first disputed question (entitled *utrum concupiscentia et mortalitas cum aliis defectibus insint homini a sua creatione*); see Girard J. Etzkorn, Hieronymus Spettmann, and Livarius Oligier (eds.), *Ioannis Pecham Quaestiones disputatae* (Grottaferrata 2002), p. 141: "Primo quantum ad concupiscentiam, quia illud non ponit defectum in minori mundo, cuiusmodi est simile in maiori mundo. Sed in maiori mundo est contrarietas motuum, quia inferiores orbes moventur contra motum primi..."; "Item, motus sensitivae in obiectum proprium naturalis est, sicut obiectum rationis ad cognitionem veritatis. Ergo cum naturale sit potentiae moveri in suum obiectum, non est contra naturam ista diversitas in homine." But it is important to notice that Salviati is not following Pecham's general line of argumentation in this question, and he is not trying to show, as Pecham does on p. 151, that *illa diversitas motuum caelestium non est contrarietatis sed diversitatis per situationem unius respectu alterius*.

120 *Ibid.*, pp. 49a–49b: "...quin est peccatum commissionis dicere duo videlicet actum et difformitatem eius ad preceptum. In peccato tamen obmissionis pure (nam interdum sunt haec permixta), ut cum quis contemnendo pretermittit ieiunium vel orationem erit in voluntate difformitas absque ullo actu. Immo talis difformitas fundatur in negatione actus, vel presupponit illam negationem. Non ieiunando namque efficitur difformis precepto

both action and deformity in his account of the act of sinning, and prefers a more concrete and human account.

Salviati follows Scotus' view that sin is sometimes based on an act and that this act should be separated by its proper nature from deformity, but still, this act is not based on anything which is obligated to a command or a maxim, but rather, it is in the power of will to choose an act of sin or not to choose it. But if this act contains, by its own nature, a disorder, it is not in the power of the will to determine whether this act would be without order or not.¹²¹ In other words, the will can choose an act, but it cannot determine the nature of this chosen act. The will has in its power the ability to choose between evil and good acts; it cannot interfere and turn a naturally disordered act into an ordered act. Thus, for instance, by choosing to commit a murder, the will chose an evil act, which is regarded by moral theologians like Salviati as naturally disordered; and so it cannot turn such an act into a good and ordered one. The separation between acts and their moral value suggested by de Mirabilibus is again refuted here by Salviati: a murder will always be evil, while charity will be good. The will can choose between them, it cannot change their given nature. In this way moral responsibility is kept within the power of the will, and thus it becomes

sicut et aliquid mali volendo. Sed dicit quispiam ibi esse actum interiorem, videlicet ipsum nolle ieiunare. Respondeo. Sat mihi erit ut aliquando sine ullo actu interiori et exteriori quis potest peccare; quia nil advertentes aut considerantes de precepto transgrediuntur preceptum ut patet in dormientibus et quibusdam ebriis, et inconsiderate agentibus." For this view regarding the act of sinning see Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros sententiarum* II, dist. 44, q. 1, a. 1: "In actu autem peccati sunt duo, scilicet substantia actus et deformitas vel defectus debitarum circumstantiarum . . ."

- 121 *Ibid.*, p. 49b: "Sufficit nobis pro Scoto ut peccatum aliquando sit in actu fundatum. Et qui actus ille sit propria natura separabilis a diformitate. Tamen non in illo qui ad preceptum obligatur stante precepto. Unde Scotus in prima distinctione, parte prima, quaestione secunda, articulo tertio, dicit licet in potestate voluntatis sit elicere actum peccati vel non elicere; tamen si actus positus ex natura sui habeat deordinationem, non est in potestate voluntatis ut actus sit positus in esse, sit vel non sit deordinatus." For the reference to Scotus see Balić (ed.), *Ioannis Duns Scoti opera omnia*, p. 36, n. a: "Sed de potestate absoluta voluntatis est magis dubium. Tamen ibi potest dici quod non est in potestate voluntatis frui sic et non sic, quia licet in potestate voluntatis sit aliquis actus ut ponatur in esse habeat illam condicionem vel non habeat quae naturaliter competit actui ex ratione obiecti. Exemplum: licet in potestate voluntatis sit elicere actum peccati vel non elicere, tamen si actus positus in esse habeat inordinationem, non est in potestate voluntatis ut actus positus sic in esse sit vel non sit inordinatus; actus autem fruitionis quantum est ex natura obiecti primi natus est ut sit trium personarum in essentia, quia—non ponendo aliquod miraculum—ex parte obiecti erit de se trium; igitur non videtur esse in potestate voluntatis ut actus positus in esse sit essentiae ut in tribus vel non ut in tribus."

part of human freedom of choice. Because of this the possibility that the act of sin is indifferent with regard to good and evil must be rejected.¹²² Performing an evil act is attributed to a free willing agent fully aware of his choice.

Salviati emphasizes the essential difference between man and beast while contrasting the condition of nature (*conditio naturae*) with punishment (*poena*): death is natural to the ox and it has nothing to do with punishment because of enmity. Human beings, however, die as a divine punishment, since if man had been created in pure natural circumstances he would have died without being able to take part in the divine vision. Thus, punishment should be regarded as a supernatural gift, since human beings would have become protected from evils, if they had not sinned.¹²³ Also the internal conflicts in the human soul, represented by difficulty (*difficultas*) and the rebellion of sense (*rebellio sensus*) are separated by Salviati from the celestial and divine gift, and thus again we have the contrast between man and nature: Salviati is not trying to harmonize between the minor and major worlds, but rather to maintain the contrast between them; this contrast is essential, as we have just seen, for man's salvation. He regards the similitudes between man and the major world discussed in many different philosophical and theological contexts simply as metaphorical.¹²⁴ Salviati claims that the difficulty concerning virtue (that is concerning the actualization of virtue) consists in the excellence of the object itself; in regard to this object, we act more easily with our mind. Following Aristotle, our Franciscan thinker rounds up his critical account of his Dominican rival by praising the faculties of the intellect and pointing out that sense-perception is corrupt, or is misleading.¹²⁵ It is important to notice that

122 *Ibid.*: "Ex his negatur ut actus peccati sit indifferens."

123 *Ibid.*, p. 50a: "Mors bovi est naturalis, nec tamen illa sibi est poena ob inimicitiam; que fillis Ade nunc est poena. Ita si Deus crearet hominem in puris naturalibus moreretur neque visionis divine foret particeps; hec tamen sibi non essent poena sed nature conditio. Nobis autem poena est, quia dono supernaturali ab his malis preservati fuissetus, si non peccavissetus."

124 *Ibid.*, pp. 50a–50b: "Nam difficultas et rebellio sensus in nobis cum dono celesti et divino munere non fuissent. Neque de essentia virtutis simpliciter est difficultas. Neque minor mundus est opus sit omnimode similis maiori. He namque similitudines sunt metaphorice."

125 *Ibid.*, p. 50b: "Difficultas etiam virtutis ut placet Scoto in fine tertii consistit in excellentia obiecti per se; circa quod facilius mente operamur, ut habetur secundo de anima. Nam intellectus ab excellentissimo vires sumit. Sensus corrumpitur." For some background to these arguments in Scotus, see Balić (ed.), *Ioannis Duns Scoti opera omnia*, p. 35: "Quantum ad tertium articulum de potentia creaturae dico quod intellectus non potest per potentiam suam naturalem videre essentiam non videndo personam, quia cum intellectus de

the contrast presented here is between the intellect and the sense (both of which are natural faculties according to Scotist theory), while the will, the only free power, which is usually contrasted with the intellect, is not mentioned at all in this context.

Salviati ends his treatise with a lively account of the dispute held in Lorenzo's palace—a background which was nowhere mentioned by de Mirabilibus. Apparently, Lorenzo himself presented the disputants with three questions: What was Adam's sin? Did God caused Lucifer to will the first evil, although it was contrary to God Himself? And what led Lucifer himself into sin, while he was aware of the fact that God is the supreme goodness, virtue and power?¹²⁶ This is another example of the difference in character between the Franciscan and the Dominican: while de Mirabilibus seems totally focused on the disputed question of evil and its theoretical-theological and practical implications, thus presenting the more traditional scholastic attitude, Salviati is a scholastic thinker who has already developed some humanist instincts; for him it is impossible to miss an opportunity for a rhetorical gesture and flattery. He thus continues, mentioning two paradoxical questions raised by Giovanni Pico: why Adam felt ashamed only after having eaten from the forbidden tree, while it is certain that he had sinned in his mind before the act; and why Augustine in his commentary on Genesis said that Adam committed a sin of pride in his mind before the temptation.¹²⁷ At this point someone among those

se sit potentia naturalis et non libera, agente obiecto intellectus agit quantum potest; ergo si obiectum ex parte sui agit manifestando tres personas intellectui, non est in potestate intellectus ut videat aliquid ostensum et aliquid non videat." For a contrast between αἰσθησις and νοῦς in Aristotle's *De anima* see e.g., 429a31–429b4.

126 *Ibid.*, pp. 50b–51a: "Miror tandem pater optime cur nil scribas de his que magnus toto in orbe Laurentius in medium attulit. Cum tamen disputationem in domo Laurentii factam inscripseris. Ipse enim diligenter et acute ut nosti tria potissimum rogabat. Primo quidem. Quod fuerit peccatum Ade. Deinde. An Deus produxerit primum malum velle Luciferi, cum illud esset ipsi Deo contradictorium. Tum quid ipsum induxit ad peccandum, cum agnosceret Deum esse summe bonitatis et summe virtutis ac potentie."

127 *Ibid.*, p. 51a: "Ubi comes etiam noster duo attulit. Primum est. Cur Adam non erubuerit nisi post esum ligni vetiti, cum tamen antea peccaverit mente ut certum est. alterum: quid est quod Augustinus super genesim dicat in mente primi hominis ante temptationem elationem precessisse. Que videbantur duo paradoxa." For the references to Augustine see *De Genesi ad litteram* VI, 28: "nam et spiritales posse cadere in temptatione peccati ostendit apostolos, ubi ait: fratres, et si praeoccupatus fuerit homo in aliquo delicto, vos, qui spiritales estis, instruite huiusmodi in spiritu lenitatis, intendens te ipsum, ne et tu temteris. hoc dixit ne cuiquam impossibile videatur, quod peccavit Adam, si spiritalis erat mente, quamvis animalis esset corpore"; XI, 42: "Illud magis movet, si iam spiritalis erat Adam, quamvis mente, non corpore, quomodo credere potuerit, quod per serpentem dictum est,

present in the dispute (probably one of the scholastics) doubted whether such an opinion can be found in Augustine; Poliziano immediately suggested that one should bring the text and check, and indeed, they found the right passages.¹²⁸ This neat description is of course another reminder of the new intellectual context in which this scholastic dispute is taking place, and also of the fact that at least some scholastics in the late fifteenth century had already learnt to appreciate the philological accuracy of the humanists. Ficino is also mentioned here by Salviati, as agreeing that this pride of Adam preceded, insofar as it is considered as a certain disposition, but not with regard to the act of sin itself.¹²⁹ Another participant in the dispute, the provincial vicar of the Franciscans Paulus of Fosseto, seemed to reject this view, claiming that such a disposition did not precede the act of sin, or else the sin would have been venial; but his view was rejected since the original sin of Adam was not venial.¹³⁰ What we seem to have here are traces of some more questions and discussions which were raised but not clarified or fully explained in the dispute. Salviati just mentions them, apologizing for being unable to discuss these questions in more detail in his treatise either, because of the importunate demands for more money by his printer, since the book has become too long by now.¹³¹ This final remark can be regarded as a modern way, one of the first

ideo deum prohibuisse, ne fructu ligni illius vincerentur, quia sciebat eos, si fecissent, futuros ut deos propter dinoscentiam boni et mali, tamquam hoc tantum bonum creaturae suae creator inviderit”; hanc autem proprie seductionem appellavit apostolus, quia id, quod suadebatur, cum falsum esset, verum putatum est, id est quod deus ideo lignum illud tangere prohibuerit, quod sciebat eos, si tetigissent, velut deos futuros, tamquam eis divinitatem invideret, qui eos homines fecerat. sed etiam si virum propter aliquam mentis elationem, quae deum internorum scrutatorem latere non poterat, sollicitavit aliqua experiendi cupiditas, cum mulierem videret accepta illa esca non esse mortuam, secundum ea, quae superius tractavimus, non tamen eum arbitror, si iam spiritali mente praeditus erat, ullo modo credere potuisse, quod eos deus ab esca illius ligni invidendo vetuisset.”

128 *Ibid.*: “Quorum alterum dum negaretur fuisse ab Augustino dictum Angelus Pollitianus codicem attulit; et ut comes aiebat duobus in capitulis illius libri clare perspeximus.”

129 *Ibid.*: “Quam quidem sententiam eruditus vir pater meus Marsilius Ficinus ita non incongrue glosabat. Ut illa elatio precesserit secundum quandam dispositionem non actum.”

130 *Ibid.*, pp. 51a–51b: “Reverendus autem minister tuive ordinis nostri magister Paulus de Fosseto videbatur velle ut illa non precessisset aut fuisset peccatum veniale. Sed sibi respondebatur primum peccatum hominis non fuisse veniale.”

131 *Ibid.*, p. 51b: “Tria tua dubia et duo comitis paradoxa magnanime Laurenti, quia in disputatione illa non fuerunt enucleata, et me urget impressoris in petendo pecunias importunitas (nam opus ultra facultatem excrevit), pretermitto alias illa si opus fuerit declaraturus.”

we have, of ending a written account of a dispute. It is again a reminder of the context, of a reality in which we already have printed books, offering new possibilities, challenges, and limitations to those early modern intellectuals. It also explains the density, and to some extent the fragmentary nature, of Salviati's style in the last pages of his work.

Salviati provides his readers at the very end of his account with a list of nine conclusions, which should be regarded as a *determinatio quaestionis*.¹³² We find here that God is the *per se* and principal cause of any good or evil effect, including what is named evil; that God is the principal cause of every evil we suffer, especially that caused by Adam's sin; that Adam's sin should never be regarded as inflicting evil upon us, or removing goodness, but only occasionally; that Adam's sin was the cause of many great good things, as well as of many evil things; that only thanks to Adam's sin man received the gift of divine grace; that it is less probable that from sinning formally can accidentally follow a greater punishment; that to say that God is the cause of sin is in many ways true, and in no way a heresy; that the smallest sin can be the cause of the greatest punishment and vice versa; and that it is not a contradiction, that every evil is in an exterior manner unpunished, and that the good is in an exterior manner left unrewarded.¹³³

132 A *determinatio quaestionis* was an essential part in the traditional *quaestio disputata* in the University of Paris; see Palémon Glorieux, 'La disputa teologica all'università di Parigi', in L. Bianchi and E. Randi (eds.), *Filosofi e teologi. La ricerca e l'insegnamento nell'università medievale* (Bergamo 1989), pp. 153–168; especially p. 156: "La *discussio* ha svolto la propria funzione di esercizio, di allenamento dialettico. Ma la disputa deve anche garantire il progresso del pensiero, condurre ad un approfondimento dei problemi sollevati. Il maestro deve assicurarsene. Lo fa riprendendo, nel primo giorno successivo di lezione, le linee essenziali della discussione, e 'determinandola', portando la propria risposta al problema; non più quella di un baccelliere o di un contraddittore, ma quella che il maestro personalmente sostiene, insieme alle ragioni che la fondano." See also Olga Weijers, 'La terminologia delle nascenti università. Studio sul vocabolario utilizzato dalla nuova istituzione', in Bianchi and Randi (eds.), *Filosofi e teologi. La ricerca e l'insegnamento nell'università medievale*, pp. 81–107; especially p. 88: "Per spiegare il termine occorre ricorrere ad un altro senso di "determinatio", che pure riguarda l'insegnamento universitario: vale a dire la conclusione pubblica di un professore dopo una "disputatio". "Determinare" in questo senso vuol dire dare la sintesi degli argomenti e determinare, vale a dire dirimere la questione nella conclusione finale di chi ha presieduto alla "disputatio".

133 Salviati, *Septem et septuaginta in opusculo*, pp. 51b–52a: "Omnis effectus sive boni sive mali, quodcumque malum sit nomen habens tale, Deus gloriosus est causa per se et principalis. Omnis mali quaecumque sit illud quod precise patimur ob culpam Ade, Deus altissimus infligendo aut subtrahendo est causa principalis. Peccatum Ade quovismodo sumptum, nec potuit, nec potest, nec poterit ullum nobis infligere malum, aut bonum

3 Some Conclusions

The Florentine dispute on evil was not a formal *quaestio disputata* but it was certainly not only a *convivium* either. It was, as a matter of fact, a new context in which it was natural for the participants to combine the two. It means that the two written accounts we have of this debate contain more information concerning the two parts of the debate, about those present, about some remarks and interventions made during the debate; they reflect a dynamic event in which the physician Bernardo Torni had suddenly to leave before presenting his own arguments in order to treat a dying woman,¹³⁴ and a text of Augustine (as we have seen in n. 128) is brought in to prove an argument. Obviously, these lively descriptions were not part of the common medieval *quaestiones disputatae*.

On the level of arguments we have noticed the tendency to give accurate references, mainly to Thomas and Scotus, the two ‘founders’ of the two scholastic schools which are dominant in the debate. We have seen how the Dominican Thomist de Mirabilibus, although less nuanced than Thomas, reached a position in which man is left with responsibility for the moral aspect of his acts, while God is responsible for these acts only. While playing, without

subtrahere, nisi occasionaliter. Peccatum Ade fuit plurimum sive maiorum bonorum quam malorum causa; presertim tenendo opinionem beati Thome Aquinatis. Si Adam non peccasset, nullus hominum divina gratia peditus fuisset. Minus peccatum formaliter, potest sequi maior poena accidentaliter. Dicere Deum benedictum esse causam peccati est multimoda veritas; et nullimoda heresis. Vide huius glosam superius. Minimum peccatum potest ordinari maxima poena; et maximum minima. Omne malum extrinsecus impunitum, et bonum remaneat irremuneratum, non contradicit. He conclusiones paradoxa illi videbantur.” These conclusions were published in Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione*, pp. 19–20.

- 134 *Ibid.*, pp. 47b–48a: “Et illico nuntius venit ut ipse cum eruditissimo philosopho magistro Bernardo Tornio accederent ad venustissimam Murelinam curandam, cuive ea die viam universe carnis obstupente cuncto Florentino populo ingressa est. Cuius rei gratia ipse magister Bernardus rationes proprias inducere non valuit.” On this incident see Verde, *Lo studio fiorentino 1473–1503: Ricerche e documenti*. vol. IV: *La vita universitaria*, vol. 2, p. 827. Compare Ficino’s remark at the end of the first chapter of his commentary on Plato’s *Symposium*, where the bishop Antonio degli Agli and the physician Diotifeci Ficino (Marsilio’s father) had to leave just after they were mentioned among the seven interpreters of the seven speeches in the dramatic setting of Ficino’s dialogue; see Marsilio Ficino, *Commentarium in convivium Platonis, de amore*, ed. and transl. Pierre Laurens (Paris 2002), pp. 5–7: “Pausanie oratio Antonio theologo. Eryximaci medici Ficino medico . . . data est; Verum episcopus ac medicus, alter ad animorum, alter ad corporum curam abire coacti . . .”

being fully aware of it, with two different notions of evil (one Neoplatonic and the other evil subjected to human experience), he shows his concern for the practical aspect of the debate, and for the fact that a conclusion according to which God is the cause of evil might offend and confuse the believers, and for this reason it should be regarded as a heresy.

While not sharing de Mirabilibus' concern for the pious ears of the believers, Salviati is more oriented towards humanist rhetoric, and he is consistent with regard to the distinction between the concrete aspect of evil as part of human life and absolute evil which is the essential cause of all evils. He thus directly attacks the 'weak' Neoplatonic notion of evil as presented by his Dominican rival, and distinguishes between three levels of evil: an abstract and absolute evil (*malum*), relative evils (*mala*), and a specific badness (*mali-tia*). This distinction enables the Franciscan to reject de Mirabilibus' sharp dichotomy between good and evil and develop a more flexible, nuanced and sensitive approach in ethics in which we find goods and evils mixed together and a free-willing agent consciously choosing to perform good or evil acts.

Beyond the lively and dynamic relations between humanist and scholastic thinkers in Renaissance Florence, the debate on evil clearly indicates the importance of moral theology and moral psychology to the study of intellectual history of the fifteenth century. It shows that representatives of the two dominant scholastic schools, the Thomist and the Scotist, managed to provoke public interest in doctrinal questions not only by referring to the great scholastic tradition, but mainly by updating and refashioning those questions and issues, and by addressing new intellectual trends and challenges. Let us now consider yet another essential concept for both moral theology and moral psychology: the concept of penitence.

The Psychology of the Voluntary Act of Penitence

The study of the Old and New Testaments for the practical purpose of preaching the doctrines of the Church characterized the Dominican Order from its very beginning. While around the year 1215 this was not yet obvious, the study of the Bible and the writing of biblical commentaries became deeply related to the duty of preaching the word of God in Dominican circles in the course of the following centuries. (In more technical terms, this was called combining *lectio* and *praedicatio*). The fact that in every Dominican convent-school a lecture on the Bible was the first lecture to be delivered every day throughout the academic year shows the importance of biblical studies among the Preaching Fathers. This made the Dominican interest in the Bible unique in comparison with biblical commentaries written in the patristic or the monastic contexts. Biblical studies play an essential role in the formation of a preacher and a disputator, a theologian who is committed to, and therefore should be competent at, defending orthodoxy against many different kinds of criticism. Thus, in addition to the traditional *Glossa ordinaria*, and to the works of the three famous and influential Parisian secular masters Peter Comestor (d. c. 1179), Peter the Chanter (d. 1197), and Stephen Langton (d. 1228) for instance, the Dominicans created their own tradition of biblical commentaries, beginning with Hugh of St-Cher's *Postillae in totam Bibliam*, using biblical exegesis as a basis for discussions of moral theology, which was essential for preachers and confessors.¹

While biblical exegeses in the patristic, monastic, and scholastic contexts stand at the centre of many scholarly discussions, it appears that late medieval, Renaissance, and early modern commentaries on Holy Scriptures are less often discussed. Even more neglected by modern scholars are fifteenth-century biblical commentaries, which somehow do not fit into a certain historiographical image of an enlightened and secular Renaissance. The contribution of biblical commentaries to moral theology and moral psychology in the Renaissance and

1 On the early stages of the Dominican Order and the development of its educational system see Mulchahey, "First the Bow is Bent in Study." *Dominican Education Before 1350*, especially pp. 3–71, 130–193, and 480–526. On biblical exegesis in the Middle Ages see the classical account by Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse Médiévale. Les Quatre Sens de L'Écriture*, 4 vols. (Paris 1959–1962). For one prominent example from the fifteenth century, see Antoninus of Florence, *Summa theologica*, vol. 4, p. 47: "In omni re quam facis adhibe tecum testimonia scripturarum."

early modern times—illustrated by one prominent example—will be at the centre of this chapter.

We shall examine here first an exposition of the Penitential Psalms written in Florence around 1499 by a leading Dominican theologian, at that time the prior of Santa Maria Novella for the third time, Giovanni Caroli (1428–1503).² Then, a short comparison between Caroli and a famous Renaissance thinker, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494), will be presented in order to show two different approaches to Scripture in the context of the Renaissance.

1 Giovanni Caroli and the Penitential Psalms

The Psalms were always highly regarded in medieval biblical culture. It should be enough to mention two famous collections of *distinctiones* written in Paris during the 1180s by two secular masters of theology: Peter of Poitiers' *Distinctiones super Psalterium* and Prepositinus of Cremona's *Summa super Psalterium*, to make this clear.³ Such collections were of course very useful for preachers who constantly needed to work on biblical themes under

2 On Caroli see Stefano Orlandi, O.P., *Necrologio di Santa Maria Novella: 1235–1504. Testo e commento biografici*, 2 vols. (Florence 1955), vol. 1, pp. 203–205; vol. 2, pp. 353–380. For a description of the manuscripts of Caroli found in the library of Santa Maria Novella see G. Pomaro, 'Censimento dei manoscritti della biblioteca di S. Maria Novella—parte II: sec. XV–XVI', in *Memorie Domenicane* 13 (1982), 203–255. The most profound historical analysis of Caroli and his role in the intellectual history of fifteenth-century Florence can be found in the works of Salvatore I. Camporeale; see especially 'Giovanni Caroli e le *Vitae fratrum* S. M. Novellae'—umanesimo e crisi religiosa (1460–1480)', in *Memorie Domenicane* 12 (1981), 141–267, including an appendix with Caroli's letter of dedication to Cristoforo Landino, his general introduction, and his seven introductions to each of the *Vitae*, on pp. 236–267; and his *Giovanni Caroli—dal 'Liber dierum' alle 'Vitae fratrum'*, including an appendix containing the third book of the *Liber dierum lucensium*, on pp. 218–233. Camporeale's other works on Caroli are: 'Giovanni Caroli, 1460–1480: Death, Memory, and Transformation', in Marcel Tetel, Ronald G. Witt, and Rona Goffen (eds.), *Life and Death in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (Durham and London 1989), pp. 16–27; 'Humanism and the Religious Crisis of the Late Quattrocento—Giovanni Caroli, O.P., and the *Liber dierum lucensium*', in Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (eds.), *Christianity and the Renaissance. Images and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento* (New-York 1990), pp. 445–466; 'Mito di Enea e crisi mendicante—il *Liber dierum* (1460–62) di Giovanni Caroli O.P.', in *Memorie Domenicane* 30 (1999), pp. 5–18. See also Amos Edelheit, *Ficino, Pico and Savonarola. The Evolution of Humanist Theology 1461/2–1498* (Leiden 2008), pp. 49–122.

3 On this see Mulchahey, *"First the Bow is Bent in Study"*, especially pp. 514–520, where further references to modern scholarly literature are provided.

demanding deadlines. In many cases, as a by-product of such sermons, a commentary was composed. It is probable that this was also the case with Caroli's exposition.

The Psalms also attracted the attention of a new group of intellectuals called the humanists. Thus, we can mention here Francesco Petrarca's exposition of the Penitential Psalms.⁴ In fifteenth-century Florence for instance, Giannozzo Manetti who mastered, beyond Greek and Latin, also the Hebrew language, and wrote a famous treatise *On the Dignity and Excellence of Man*, translated between 1454 and 1455 the Psalter from Hebrew into a classical Ciceronian Latin, using Jewish commentators in the process.⁵ Another hero of the humanist movement in Florence, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, most famous for his speech *On the Dignity of Man*, also learned some Hebrew and wrote *Expositions on the Psalms*, probably between 1488 and 1491.⁶ We shall discuss this work towards the end of the chapter.

4 Francesco Petrarca, *Opere*, 2 vols., ed. Emilio Bigi (Milan 1975), vol. 2, pp. 494–509.

5 For Manetti's discussion of the dignity and excellence of man see e.g., Elizabeth R. Leonard (ed.), *Ianotii Manetti De dignitate et excellentia hominis* (Padua 1975); on p. 54 we find that "David etiam pluribus Psalmorum suorum locis his et huiusmodi verbis usus, 'Qui sperant in te', domine, 'in eternum exultabunt', manifestam animarum perpetuitatem ostendere et demonstrare dignoscitur"; on p. 87 we read: "David denique, hanc maximam ac prestantissimam ipsius hominis dignitatem supra quam dici potest admirans, in octavo illo celebratissimo et vulgatissimo Psalmo, quasi deum percontaretur et paulo post sibi ipsi sic interroganti responderet, carmina hec ponit: 'Quid est homo quod memor es eius? Aut filius hominis quoniam visitas eum? Minuisti eum paulo minus ab angelis, gloria et honore coronasti eum: et constituisti eum super opera manuum tuarum. Omnia subiecisti sub pedibus eius: oves et boves universas, insuper et pecora campi, volucres celi et pisces maris, qui perambulant semitas maris.'" For Manetti's biographies see e.g., Stefano Ugo Baldassarri (ed.), *Vite di Dante, Petrarca e Boccaccio* (Palermo 2003); Baldassarri, Rolf Bagemihl (eds.), *Biographical Writings* (Cambridge, Mass. 2003). Most relevant to this context is Paul Botley's *Latin Translations in the Renaissance. The Theory and Practice of Leonardo Bruni, Giannozzo Manetti, Erasmus* (Cambridge 2004), chapter 2 and the appendix. For a recent study see Christine Smith and Josef F. O'Connor, *Building the Kingdom. Giannozzo Manetti on the Material and Spiritual Edifice* (Arizona 2006).

6 For some of Pico's main works in a modern critical edition see Eugenio Garin (ed.), *De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno, e scritti vari* (Florence 1942). And see also Pico's *Opera omnia* (Basel, 1557; repr. Hildesheim, 1969). There is a vast scholarly literature on Pico. For some relevant accounts on Pico and his interest in Hebrew, the Bible, and Kabbalah, see Chaim Wirszubski's detailed philological analyses of Pico's Kabbalistic theses in his *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism* (Harvard 1989). For a recent discussion of Pico's commentary on the creation narrative found at the beginning of the book of Genesis, see Crafton Black, *Pico's Heptaplus and Biblical Hermeneutics* (Leiden 2006). For the importance of Kabbalah in Pico see Brian P. Copenhaver, "The Secret of Pico's Oratio: Cabala and

But the hero of this study is Giovanni Caroli, a relatively unknown figure—nowadays—in Florentine intellectual history of the last decades of the *Quattrocento*. Giovanni Caroli was a man who had a share in the two great traditions of his time: the scholastic and the humanist. Despite his position as a leading Dominican theologian in Florence and his obvious preference for the scholastic tradition (as well as his explicit critique of the new humanist fashion), his writings reveal a far more complex picture, in which we find the unique fifteenth-century mixture of traditional ideas and new notions. In this respect he remained loyal to both his spiritual mentor, the influential Florentine archbishop Antonino Pierozzi (whom we shall discuss in the next chapter) and to his teacher and colleague at the University of Florence, the humanist Cristoforo Landino. Caroli was three times prior of Santa Maria Novella, taught theology at the *Studium generale* there, which was part of what Paul F. Grendler called a “confederation of the *studia monastica* under the name of the civic university but with limited participation by the latter”, and which formed the Faculty of Theology of the *Studio fiorentino*, the University of Florence.⁷ He was involved in the observant reform movement, and during the 1490s he led the opposition to the influential preacher from San Marco, Girolamo Savonarola. Caroli was also a prolific author, who wrote biblical exegeses, a history of Florence, and polemical writings against Savonarola, Giovanni Nesi, and Pico. He was deeply involved in both the religious and intellectual life of his time. Despite his obvious importance to Florentine intellectual history during the last decades of the fifteenth century, and the fact that he was involved in almost every central debate concerning theological, philosophical,

Renaissance Philosophy’, in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* XXVI (2002), 56–81. For some more general accounts see Garin, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola: vita e dottrina* (Florence 1937); Kristeller, ‘Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and His Sources’, in *L’Opera e il pensiero di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola nella storia dell’umanesimo, convegno internazionale* (Mirandola: 15–18 Settembre 1963), 2 vols. (Florence 1965), vol. 1, pp. 35–133; Louis Valcke, *Pic de la Mirandole—un itinéraire philosophique* (Paris 2005).

7 On the institutional status of theology in the Italian universities and in the academic life of the Renaissance, see Paul F. Grendler, *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore 2002), pp. 353–392. The citation above is from p. 357. The Faculty of Theology in Florence was established in 1349 and included “five significant theological *studia generalia*: the Dominican *studium* at the convent of Santa Maria Novella, the *studium* of the Friars Minor of St. Francis at Santa Croce, the Augustinian Hermit *studium* at Santo Spirito, the Carmelite *studium* at Santa Maria del Carmine, and the Servite *studium* at Santissima Annunziata”; see *ibid.*, p. 359. Grendler also mentions there another four “shadowy *studia* . . . making a total of nine.” For a more detailed account of the Florentine Faculty see Celestino Piana, O.F.M., *La facoltà teologica dell’università di Firenze nel Quattro e Cinquecento* (Rome 1977).

or political matters, almost none of Caroli's writings has been published or critically edited until the present day, and they are very rarely discussed in detail and on their own merit in modern scholarly literature.⁸

As far as I know, Caroli's *Esposizione dei Salmi penitenziali* has never been discussed by any modern scholar, and it is only mentioned, with a brief description and a transcription of the first sentence of the proem (f. 1r), the first sentences of the first exposition (ff. 3r–3v), and the last sentence (f. 94v), in Stefano Orlandi's list of Caroli's manuscripts found in his *Necrologio di Santa Maria Novella: 1235–1504*, which was published in 1955, on pp. 371–372. The text is extant in a single autograph manuscript, Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magl. XL.46, ff. 1r–94v. The handwriting is very difficult to read, probably due to the author's old age (Caroli used to have an excellent handwriting when he was younger, and he even served as a copyist in Santa Maria Novella's library). Interestingly, it is written in Italian, a fact which makes it more probable that this exposition is indeed the by-product of Caroli's sermons on these Psalms delivered during his long career as a preacher in the Florentine churches. It begins with a proem (ff. 1r–2v), where we find some account of the structure of the work, and continues with specific expositions of Psalm 113 (ff. 3r–33r), Psalm 6 (ff. 33r–39v), Psalm 31 (ff. 39v–46v), Psalm 37 (ff. 46v–54r), Psalm 50 (ff. 54r–64v), Psalm 101 (ff. 65r–74r), Psalm 129 (ff. 74v–78v), Psalm 142 (ff. 78v–84v), and Psalm 90 (ff. 84v–94v).

In the proem, after a declaration concerning the divine inspiration of Scripture, Caroli follows Jerome and Augustine in emphasizing the importance and singularity of the Psalms in comparison to other parts of the Bible. The excellence of the Psalms is accepted by both the Latin and Greek churches,

8 See, e.g., Rab Hatfield, 'A Source for Machiavelli's Account of the Regime of Pietro de' Medici', in Myron P. Gilmore (ed.), *Studies On Machiavelli* (Florence 1972), pp. 317–333, where the influence of Caroli's historical accounts (found in his *Libri de temporibus suis*) upon Machiavelli is shown. Caroli is also mentioned, in different historical contexts, in Garin, *La cultura filosofica del Rinascimento italiano—ricerche e documenti* (Florence 1961), pp. 224–225; Giovanni di Napoli, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola e la problematica dottrinale del suo tempo* (Rome 1965), p. 144; Kristeller, *Medieval Aspects of Renaissance Learning*, pp. 58 and 142; Donald Weinstein, *Savonarola and Florence—Prophecy and Patriotism in the Renaissance* (Princeton 1970), pp. 234–238 (see esp. n. 22 on p. 234 for more biographical and bibliographical references to Caroli); Lorenzo Polizzotto, *The Elect Nation—The Savonarolan Movement in Florence 1494–1545* (Oxford 1994), pp. 59–65. See also Polizzotto's *La missione di G. Savonarola in Firenze* (Pistoia 1996), pp. 29–53; Christopher S. Celenza, *Piety and Pythagoras in Renaissance Florence—The Symbolum Nesianum* (Leiden 2001), pp. 43–45.

claims our theologian.⁹ But among the different chapters in the Book of Psalms some are more praiseworthy thanks to a certain quality they contain. Among this special group of Psalms we find also the Penitential Psalms. What is so special about these Psalms? They contain many more major mysteries than do the rest of the Psalms. These Psalms are most useful and necessary for making one more familiar with the Christian mysteries such as the triune God (*placitare* is the term used by Caroli, which can be best explained by the Italian phrase *intimare con decreto*), and thus are essential for our salvation.¹⁰ The implication here is that the fact that these Psalms are full of mysteries means that somehow they can lead us to salvation, but the relation between those mysteries and our salvation is complex and can be bridged only through a special state of being in an intimate connection with the trinitarian God.¹¹ Such an intimate connection seems to go beyond the acts of understanding or loving, and thus beyond a trivial dichotomy between ‘intellectualists’ and ‘voluntarists’, or between rational and mystical perspectives. The aim of this exposition is to propel the souls of believers towards devotion and to emphasize the prophetic and mystical meaning inherent in these Psalms.¹² By claiming that “some certain expositions” should both encourage the souls and make them

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- 9 Giovanni Caroli, *Esposizione dei Salmi penitenziali*, MSS Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magl. XL.46, f. 1r: “Niente di meno probata da la ecclesia la excellentia de’ salmi nella chiesa di Iddio et latina e grecha, secondo san Hieronimo e santo Agustino . . .” I have added modern punctuation and accents to facilitate the reading of the passages cited from Caroli’s text, but I have left the inconsistent and rather ‘wild’ spelling, typical of fifteenth-century Italian. I have used [...] to indicate difficult words or sentences which I could not decipher. In any case there are still problems in some passages which should be resolved in a critical edition.
- 10 *Ibid.*: “E tra essi psalmi alcuni anno una penitentialita gratia, opera gratuita dagli fin molti più per questa re che tanti glorificati. Come diciamo de psalmi quindici e de salmi penitentiali e de certi altri privati salmi, perché in se contengono molti più e maggior misterii dagli altri. E alcuni di questi provano certi bisognii essi più utili e necessari a placitare lo ttrino Iddio e ad noi conservare la desiderata salvetza.” For the Italian phrase *intimare con decreto* see N. Zingarelli, *Vocabolario della lingua italiana* (Bologna 1949), p. 1413 (under ‘placitare’).
- 11 On the importance of trinitarian theology just before the fifteenth century see Friedman, *Medieval Trinitarian Thought from Aquinas to Ockham*.
- 12 Caroli, *Esposizione*, ff. 1r–1v: “La qual cosa io considerando, anchora il desiderio tuo [Caroli is referring here to his friend Bernardo Gondi, to whom he dedicated this exposition], ed essendo in questi peccati nostri noi [1v] assai nell’animo quanto mi pensai essere buono in qualche per sodisfare al tuo desiderio e al mio. E sine di alchuni certi expositioni per suscitar gli animi nela devotione di quegli e far più noto lo intelletto prophetico misticho e [...] non avessi gratia provata nelle consuetudine delle sancte scripture.”

more familiar with what he regards as “prophetic and mystical intellect”, Caroli makes his own contribution to the increasing mystical aspect of Renaissance religiosity in general.¹³ More specifically, this should connect him to the Florentine philosophical and theological discourse associated with Ficino and Pico.¹⁴ But beside this known topos, Caroli is also pointing out that the Penitential Psalms are most useful and necessary for both secular and religious people in coping with their daily troubles caused by their own sins. They contain a kind of virtue implanted in them by God, through which it might be possible to help those sinners. Citing 2 Corinthians 3, 6 (*littera occidit spiritus autem vivificat*), Caroli emphasizes the importance of spiritual knowledge in what seems like a methodological remark on interpretation.¹⁵ Thanks to the goodness of God and to the special quality of these Psalms it is possible to help others, since those mysteries are most relevant and suitable to human nature; but it is possible to taste them only through spiritual understanding and knowledge which is beyond natural reason. Thus, the doctrine of a trinitarian God was built into our thought and it cannot be attributed to us. It was later distributed by the Doctors of the Church in different places and through

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- 13 On this see e.g., Schmitt, ‘Perennial Philosophy: from Agostino Steuco to Leibniz’ and ‘*Prisca Theologia e Philosophia Perennis*: due temi del Rinascimento italiano e la loro fortuna’, in his *Studies in Renaissance Philosophy and Science* (London 1981), I and II; Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London 1964); D. P. Walker, *The Ancient Theology: Studies in Christian Platonism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (London 1972); Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione; Filosofia e religione nella cultura del Rinascimento*.
 - 14 See e.g., Ernst Cassirer, ‘Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. A Study in the History of Renaissance Ideas’, in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 3 (1942), pp. 123–144 and 319–346; ‘Ficino’s Place in Intellectual History’, in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 6 (1945), pp. 483–501.
 - 15 Caroli, *Esposizione*, f. 1v: “Per se addunque i salmi penitentiali per più utili a noi e necessarii veduti in quante tribolazioni ci troviamo tutti, e secolari e religiosi e in quanto disordine nel quale siamo, per divina permissione, non per altro che per nostri peccati. E perché si nel la intelligentia di questi salmi veniamo a pregiare e rendere di quegli in colpa. Forse che per la bontà di Iddio e per la virtù di questi salmi plantando di Iddio ne potremo aiutare altri. E misterii che in questi si contragono sono gravissimi e molto degni e allo ingegno humano e divoto molto accomodanti, ma bisogna con intelletto e sapere spirituale gustandogli, viene da nostri sempre del detto apostolico che dice: *Littera occidit spiritus autem vivificat* (2 Cor 3, 6), perché altrimenti non fano crescere il desiderato fructo. Non è segreto in questa expositione la dichiarazione di persona ma solo lo instincto, ma dato lo trino Iddio nel pensiero mio, non che per questo io attribuisca la doctrina a me, ma qualche è stato detto, poi passato da nostri doctori in diversi luoghi, e adversi propositi, legho qui ratio certo insieme e rechato al proposito mio.”

diverse arguments, until a kind of correlation was found between certain reason and our own intentions. Caroli's exposition is arranged logically, focusing on the practical issue of helping sinners find their way to penitence. For this reason, he does not begin with an exposition of the Penitential Psalms themselves, but rather precedes it with his interpretation of Psalm 113 (*in exitu Israhel de Aegypto*), to prepare the ground for discussing the Penitential Psalms, since, as he explains, the sinner who will use the Penitential Psalms should first know how to get out of Egypt, which symbolizes servitude to sin. He must understand how and why he entered this symbolic Egypt in the first place, and what might be the remedy for his situation.¹⁶ Interestingly, the Aristotelian method of prefacing the exposition of the main discussion with some preparatory account is mentioned here as Caroli's model. After explaining the Penitential Psalms, Caroli ends his exposition with a discussion of Psalm 90 (*qui habitat in adiutorio altissimi*), in order to show the way to divine goodness.¹⁷ Caroli's exposition is in fact an account of the psychological process of penitence. Asking people to do penitence was a regular formula used in sermons. But where should one start? In this exposition, Caroli is acting as a moral theologian, using his experience as a preacher and a confessor, and showing the way from the lowest possible position to the highest one. For him, the starting-point is the most significant, and without it no real penitence is possible, and this stage includes awareness of one's own situation as a sinner, together with a deep understanding of the reasons for one's sins.

16 *Ibid.*, ff. 1v–2r: “E perché Aristotele—summo phylosopho—in alchuno de sui libri tiene questo [2r] ordine, che alchune cose come primo de spostare manda innanzi alla sua narratione, e alchune dopo la confermatione delle cose da ll'inseniamente, prima in questa expositione io mando innanzi—come innanzi allo exercito si mandano gli spianatori a far la via—la expositione di ‘in exito Israel de Aegypto’, perché il peccatore che ha a dire i salmi penitentiali non gli dice per altri si non per uscire dell’Egypto, nel quale è entrato peccando per intendere come n’ è entrato e perché, e che rimedio habbia a usar ne fruttare Domine, e dipoi me aiuti in exsercizio quando ha inteso con detti salmi. E perché la perseverantia nel cominciare bene è sommamente necessaria affar chella penitentia futura sia fruttuosa.”

17 *Ibid.*, f. 2r: “Poi in fine de psalmi penitentiali e loro expositione vengho con certe altre cose, la dichiarazione e vero di expositione, quanto quel salmo molto estimado e divoto: Qui habitat in adiutorio altissimi (Ps 90, 1), per mostrare qual sia la via e il modo a presentar nella bona gratia cominciare per inchinare assai la divina bontà e al suo aiuto, senza l’quale né cominciare, né precedere, né dar presentatione si può, e alchuna buona operatione, perché el comintare è in noi mediante la gratia perveniente, e subsequente e gratum faciente in fine per sicurare tutte le opere nostre.”

2 Caroli's Exposition of Psalm 6

Let us examine Caroli's exposition of the first Penitential Psalm, that is Psalm 6 (*Domine ne in furore tuo*), the only Psalm which is discussed by both Caroli and Pico. The structure of the exposition is quite simple: our commentator first cites each verse, and each citation is followed by an explanation which is thematic and allegorical. From time to time Caroli cites verses from other parts of the Bible as part of his explanation, whenever he thinks that this can help him with his argument. Only once does he cite a non-biblical authority: Augustine.¹⁸ Caroli skips the detailed literal explanation in most cases by simply translating the verses into Italian.

Caroli's first concern, stemming from verse 2 where anger (*furor*) and ire (*ira*) are mentioned, is to determine the exact relation between God and these passions. The aim of both passions are vengeance (*vendetta*) and justice (*giustizia*), but only the last, which is a positive passion, can be ascribed to God, Who in any case is not subject to such passions.¹⁹ The prophet's intention by mentioning these passions is to warn sinners not to reach their death and the final judgment without penitence and indulgence; for this reason he is begging God not to wait with His judgment and punishment but rather to punish him during this present life, when mercy and correction are still possible and meaningful. Otherwise the sinner remains wicked until the final judgment, when it is too late.²⁰ The present life, while there are still hope and mercy, is thus the proper arena for the act of penitence. Reconstructing the psychological mechanism of penitence via an exposition of the first Penitential Psalm is thus the subtext here.

The first step in this mechanism of penitence is an awareness by the individual of his weakness, shown in verses 3–4: "Have mercy on me O Lord, for I am weak: heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled. And my soul is troubled exceedingly . . ." Caroli emphasizes that although the prophet admits that he is seriously weak or ill, he is not yet dead; he thus begs God for a hope of salvation:

18 *Ibid.*, f. 37v: "El quale poi che ai adoperato immediate per quel disordine che interviene in te medesimo senti qualche rimaso come se dicessi che o io fatto. E questa è sententia di sancto Agostino che dice: Jussisti, dice, et ita est ut pena sibi sit omnis animus inordinatus." The quotation from Augustine can be found in his *Confessiones* 1, 12, 19.

19 *Ibid.*, ff. 33r–33v.

20 *Ibid.*, ff. 34r–34v.

But the prophet says: O Lord, I am seriously ill, but I am not yet dead. And give me now hope of salvation, I confess and recognize that I am seriously ill, but I am not dead.²¹

Caroli presents an analogy between the bones as the rulers of the body, and the virtues as the rulers of the soul. Thus, the bones are analogous to the virtues, and the physical state of disturbance is transformed into a moral disturbance.²² This moral disturbance reaches its high point in Caroli's interpretation of verse 7: "I have laboured in my groanings, every night I will wash my bed I will water my couch with my tears." This is the lowest and most difficult state of the sinner, when he truly confesses his sins and struggles against his own habits as a sinner.²³ At this point the Holy Spirit intervenes, causing the first movement in the sinner's soul towards penitence, since, Caroli claims, it is impossible to do it without the grace of God.²⁴ Here our commentator follows an image found in Thomas Aquinas:

And he [the prophet] calls conscience his own bed since we repose in it just like in a bed . . .²⁵

Caroli places the notion of conscience at the heart of the mechanism of penitence. He seems anxious to ascribe it directly to the prophet, as if 'conscience' were part of the biblical text, while Thomas is more cautious, mentioning

21 *Ibid.*, ff. 34v–35r: "Però dice el propheta: o Signore, io sono bene gravemente infirmo, ma io non sono anchora morto. E dammi anchora speranza di salute, confesso e conosco che sono gravemente infirmo, ma io non sono morto."

22 *Ibid.*, f. 35r: "Ove è da notare che come l'ossa naturalmente regnano il corpo, così naturalmente le virtù regnano l'anima." The analogy between bones and virtues is a known topos in biblical interpretations; see, e.g., Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 31, 2, 13: "Intendite quia si clamaret peccata sua, et taceret merita sua, innovarentur ossa eius, id est virtutes eius . . ."; Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob* 23, 24, 48: "Ossa in scriptura sacra virtutes accipimus . . ."

23 *Ibid.*, f. 36v: "... o Signore mio, o Domine e Signore e miei peccati io non te lo potrebo mentire. E questo perché el peccatore che ha fatto habito e consuetudine nel peccare dita una grande fatica . . ."

24 *Ibid.*: "... e a ffare de quello in che se molto il dettato gli dispiaccia che è il primo movimento dello Spirito Santo che fa nella mente del peccatore."

25 *Ibid.*, f. 37r: "E chiama la constientia il letto suo perché come nel letto noi ci riposiamo . . ." See Thomas Aquinas, *In Psalmos Davidis expositio*, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 18 (Paris 1876), p. 255: "Dicit autem, *Lacrymis stratum meum rigabo*, quia etiam in lecto jacens plorando perfundebat pannos lecti, quasi irriguum lacrymarum. Moraliter, lectus in quo homo quiescit, est conscientia, hanc lavat homo per lacrymas in poenitentia . . ."

'conscience' as part of the moral interpretation of *lectus*. While the conscience of the sinner is constantly disturbed and is never at rest, the one who is truly doing penitence is trying hard to clean his conscience and keep it clear of any stain of sin.²⁶ The connection between virtues and conscience is explained, for instance, at the beginning of Antoninus' *Summa theologica*. Here the Florentine archbishop, who was Caroli's mentor, mentions Job 1, 19, where four corners of a house are described as being struck down by a desert wind; this event is interpreted by Gregory the Great in terms of our soul being demolished by a multitude of impure spirits which turned the conscience away from its state of tranquility. The four corners represent the edifice of our soul: prudence, temperance, courage, and justice.²⁷ Conscience here, according to Antoninus, who follows Gregory closely, is a kind of internal equilibrium upon which the four cardinal virtues, representing the edifice of our soul, lean. When conscience is disturbed, the whole edifice is shaken. Caroli's image of conscience as a bed is thus influenced by his intellectual milieu. This image is concrete and simple, unlike other images used for conscience, such as the heart or some abstract interiority. And thus:

And God, being most just, cannot allow the ugliness of blame to exist without the beauty of justice. And this is the remorse of conscience.²⁸

Caroli ends his exposition of Psalm 6 by emphasizing the role of shame and the importance of free choice (*libertà dello arbitrio*) in the mechanism of penitence,²⁹ following verse 11: "Let all my enemies be ashamed, and be very

26 *Ibid.*, f. 37r: "E per contrario la constientia del peccatore [...] mai si riposa, sempre turbata, sempre si rode. Però il vero penitente si sforza di lavar la e nettar la da ogni macula di peccato per uscire di tanta angustia."

27 Antoninus of Florence, *Summa theologica*, vol. 4, p. 14: "Figuratur etiam per quattuor angulos domus Job i, que est conscientia secundum Gregorium in moralibus [*Moralia in Iob* 2, 49]." The whole discussion is of the four cardinal virtues which have been mentioned earlier.

28 Caroli, *Esposizione*, f. 38r: "E non pote Iddio—essendo giustissimo—che sia la bruttura della colpa senza la bellezza della giustitia. E questo è il rimorso della constientia."

29 *Ibid.*, ff. 39r–39v: "La penitentia vera fa che l'uomo si vergogna de peccati e conturbasi del recordarsene e piglia dispiacere di quel atto disordinato, non solamente di questo ma etiamdio de peccati..."; "Concludiamo addunque questo salmo primo... in rachomandarsi a Iddio che non riserbi la punitione al l'ultimo della vita noi, né al l'ultimo giuditio, ma già in questa vita quando siamo nella libertà dello arbitrio apoterci muovere di male in bene."

much troubled: let them be turned back, and be ashamed very speedily.” It is crucial to make a good use of our ability to choose—an ability which is part of the present life—thus moving away from evil and towards the good.

Caroli’s emphasis and focus is on the present life of the individual and his state *in via*, under human constraints, weaknesses, and possibilities. By having the freedom of choice the act of penitence becomes meaningful. Relating in this manner the notions of free choice, penitence and conscience, we are getting quite close to the modern tendency not to distinguish between ‘conscience’ and ‘consciousness’. The first Penitential Psalm is a prayer not to reach death and final judgment without penitence; God must judge us now, but this is dependent upon man through the voluntary act of true penitence.

3 Pico della Mirandola’s Exposition of Psalm 6

A comparison between Caroli’s exposition and Pico’s reveals some interesting differences both in style and content. Pico’s exposition of Psalm 6, which is written in Latin, is very formal and impersonal in style; the humanist-oriented thinker employs an academic style with formal divisions and a formal structure. Thus we find in Pico’s exposition the following sections: *Defensio translationis sexti psalmi*, *Expositio tituli*, *Argumentum et causa psalmi*, *Expositio litteralis psalmi sexti*, and *Expositio moralis in modum theologicae meditationis*.³⁰ Pico cites many authorities, both Jewish and Christian, and he offers a detailed literal exposition, sometimes word for word, comparing different authorities, translations, and interpretations. His exposition reads almost like a compilation of all the previous interpretations of this Psalm. A good example is his literal exposition of verses 3–4, where Pico discusses the phrase *turbata sunt ossa mea* while mentioning Ibn Ezra, Jerome, and Augustine.³¹ For Caroli it was enough merely to note that bones represent virtues in order to move from the physical to the moral level. In his literal exposition of verse 2, Pico does not mention the need to be corrected during the present life, but focuses on the

30 Pico’s exposition of Psalm 6 can be found in Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Expositiones in Psalmos*, ed. Antonino Raspanti (Florence 1997), pp. 62–78. For Pico’s general perspective in matters of theology and religion see e.g., Raspanti, *Filosofia, teologia, religione: l’unità delle visioni in Giovanni Pico della Mirandola* (Palermo 1991).

31 *Ibid.*, p. 66: “Scribit Avenazra ex his lectionibus magnitudinem doloris ostendi ut etiam ossa sensus expertia illum sentiant. Hieronimus, Augustinus et alii plerique per ossa virtutes animae intelligunt.”

manner of correction: *non ut damnandus sed ut purgandus*.³² This is nice Latin, but many readers may miss the essential theological point here which was emphasized by Caroli: one should not wait until death and the final judgment to be corrected: correction must take place now in the present life and under God's mercy. Conscience is not mentioned at all by Pico, and his moral exposition of verse 7 is focused on sensual sins represented by the image of the bed.³³ It is interesting, on the other hand, to find in Pico's exposition "the cunning tricks of an ambushing demon" (*insidiantis daemonis astus*) and "impious demons" (*impii daemones*) threatening the individual,³⁴ while the notion of shame does not seem to play a role in the moral correction of the individual.³⁵ This, once again, shows the different intentions of Caroli and Pico: Pico is not interested in moral theology or moral psychology and focuses on the intellectual and more speculative aspects of biblical interpretation; Caroli's point of view is that of a moral theologian who needs to reconstruct the psychology of sinners in order to provide them with a meaningful instrument, thus turning his exposition into a kind of prescription for true penitence and salvation.

4 Conclusion

Obviously the opinions of Pico and Caroli are paradigmatic two different points of view: while Pico is writing for learned humanists or theologians, who would appreciate, for instance, the many sources he uses, Caroli is writing for the believers, in a personal and non-authoritative style, and he hardly cites any

32 *Ibid.* Compare Thomas Aquinas, *In Psalmos Davidis expositio*, pp. 253–254: "Modo autem arguit, sed non in furore; quia ad emendandum arguit, et non ad condemnandum: et hoc petit iste cum dicit, *Neque in ira tua corripies me*: quasi dicat, Corripe me, sed non in ira vel in furore, sed per flagella temporalia." Thomas is closer to Caroli in emphasizing the temporal whips, or punishments, to which one should look for, as against divine ire and anger which are eternal and represent the final judgment; but Caroli is more clear and explicit than Thomas on this point, emphasizing the need to be punished and corrected in the present life.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 76: "Iusto dolore confectus contritusque singulis noctibus, quibus defluere delitiis et vitiis solebam et iram atque furorem iustissimae tuae vindictae provocare, conabor contribulato spirito (gratissimum tibi sacrificium) colligationes impietatis dissolvere et contractas in animo peccatorum maculas ob sensus corporis, in quo veluti in lecto voluptatum delitiamur et putridae libidinis strato marcescimus, lacrymis moeroris et afflictionis eluere."

34 *Ibid.*, pp. 76–78.

35 *Ibid.*, pp. 70–72, 78.

authorities. For Pico it is an intellectual task, for Caroli it is more of a pastoral endeavour. For this reason penitence is not emphasized in Pico's exposition,³⁶ since it is not in the text, while the psychological mechanism of the voluntary act of penitence is the subtext of Caroli's exposition. In this respect Pico's exposition is close to a modern commentary on a biblical text. But if it is true that one important aspect of modern moral thinking is the emergence of the individual conscience as a source of the agent's moral judgments and actions, then Giovanni Caroli, playing his part in the complicated discussions of moral psychology among Renaissance and early modern thinkers by focusing on the individual sinner, should be regarded as one of the forerunners of such modernity no less than Giovanni Pico della Mirandola.

In the next chapter we shall examine in some more detail the concept of conscience in relation to cognition and the will as they are reflected in the thought of Caroli's mentor, the Florentine archbishop Antoninus.

36 The term is mentioned three times in the moral exposition; see Pico, *Expositiones*, p. 74: "Hosti pepercisti, Domine, et inter terrestres tuae militiae munera nos iterum collocasti, poenitentiae sacramento in pristinam libertatem dignitatemque restitutos"; p. 76: "Poenitentiae igitur condona spacium, differ terminum primae mortis, ut de secunda morte, protectus scuto tuae misericordiae, triumphem"; "*Non moriar igitur, sed vivam*; diuturno etenim poenitentiae tempore opus est mihi, si expiare lacrymis omnia delicta velim."

PART 2

Questions of Intellect and Will, Freedom and Love



A Discussion of Conscience, Cognition and Will

There are very few figures of the calibre of Antoninus of Florence (1389–1459) in the intellectual history of the Renaissance and early modern Europe. As an outstanding theologian and moral thinker who was deeply concerned with practical problems of usury and extreme poverty on the one hand, and spiritual matters concerning the much-needed reform in the Church and his own Order on the other, Antoninus played a leading role in the economic, social, and political life of the Florentine republic of his day. His writings left an indelible mark on many issues pertaining to moral psychology which were discussed all over Europe in the early modern era.

This chapter will not attempt to do justice to the historical figure of Antoninus. To do that one needs to dedicate several volumes to him alone. The chapter is focused on one single aspect of his thought, what is commonly described as Archbishop Antoninus' philosophy of action, that is, his emphasis on actions within the general framework of his moral thought, as expressed in his *opus magnum*, the *Summa Theologica*, written roughly between 1440 and 1454.¹ A modest attempt will be made to reconstruct part of Antoninus' moral theology and moral psychology through a discussion of some of the key terms in his thought, mainly 'conscience', 'knowledge', 'virtues', and 'actions', in the context of Renaissance and early modern philosophical discourse in general, and, more specifically, that of late scholastic thought.

1 Antoninus' *Summa* was first printed in Venice in 1477–1480, and in Nürenberg in 1477–1479. We have nine complete and several partial editions produced before the end of the fifteenth century, and yet another nine in the sixteenth century. Important details about the *Summa* and the circulation of manuscripts of Antoninus' treatises which later became part of the *Summa*, with further references, are summarized in Peter Francis Howard, *Beyond the Written Word. Preaching and Theology in the Florence of Archbishop Antoninus 1427–1459* (Città di Castello 1995), pp. 19–41. For a list of Antoninus' works and manuscripts, together with references to some of the modern scholarly literature, see e.g., Kaeppli, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Medii Aevi*, vol. 1, pp. 80–100; vol. 4, pp. 27–31. All through this book I shall be using the 1740 Verona edition (repr. Graz 1959), which is the closest one has to a critical edition.

1 Antoninus and Modern Scholarship

The great fifteenth-century Florentine moralist Antoninus Pierozzi has long been recognized as an important figure by modern scholars,² although his moral thinking has not always been discussed in sufficient detail and with due appreciation, and his influence outside scholastic circles—as, for example, upon a humanist-oriented philosopher such as Marsilio Ficino—is still not recognized in modern scholarly literature.³ Thus, the standard scholarly view is that “... Ficino’s early works show no influence of the archbishop’s heavy-

2 The best historical account of Antoninus’ social, political, and ecclesiastical relations is still David Peterson’s *Archbishop Antoninus: Florence and the Church in the Earlier Fifteenth Century* (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University 1985). Valuable biographical information can be found in Orlandi’s *S. Antonino, Arcivescovo di Firenze, Dottore della Chiesa: Studi*, 2 vols. (Florence 1959). Antoninus’ achievements as an economic thinker are discussed in Raymond De Roover, *San Bernardino of Siena and Sant’ Antonino of Florence: The Two Great Economic Thinkers of the Middle Ages* (Boston 1967). A more recent study of Antoninus in the context of Florentine ritual traditions can be found in Maureen C. Miller, ‘Why the Bishop of Florence Had to Get Married’, in *Speculum* 81/4 (2006), pp. 1055–1091.

3 Two prominent examples will suffice to make this point here, although this issue deserves much further study. The opening sentence of Ficino’s *Theologia platonica* is echoed in the third argument for the immortality of the soul, found in the first part, the first title, chapter five, of Antoninus’ *Summa*; see *Summa theologica*, vol. 1, p. 42: “Tertio sic probatur: aut anima est immortalis, aut homo infelicius est cunctis creaturis. Secunda pars non est vera, ut constat manifeste; ergo anima est immortalis.” Compare this with Marsilio Ficino, *Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum*, 6 vols., eds. James Hankins with William Bowen, transl. Michael J. B. Allen with John Warden (Cambridge, Mass. 2001–2006), vol. 1, p. 14: “Cum genus humanum propter iniquitatem animi imbecillitatemque corporis et rerum omnium indigentiam duriorum quam bestiae vitam agat in terris, si terminum vivendi natura illi eundem penitus atque ceteris animalibus tribuisset, nullum animal esset infelicius homine.” The title of this opening chapter reads: “Si animus non esset immortalis, nullum animal esset infelicius homine.” The idea that religion was what gave preeminence in nature to mankind, and that without religion there would be no difference between man and beast, is mentioned by Antoninus, who refers to Giovanni Dominici as the source of this idea; see *Summa theologica*, vol. 1, p. 42: “Dominus Joannes Dominici super Ecclesiastem inducit plures alias rationes ad hoc probandum, et exinde auctoritates. Et prima est, quia nihil est, quod nos discernat a brutis et mutis, nisi religio et cognitio summi Dei.” This idea plays a central role in Ficino’s *De Christiana religione*; see *Opera*, vol. 1, p. 2: “... homo perfectissimum animal, ea proprietate maxime tum perfectione pollet, tum ab inferioribus discrepat, qua perfectissimis, id est, divinis coniungitur. Rursus, si homo animalium mortalium perfectissimus est, in quantum homo, ob eam praecipue dotem est omnium perfectissimus, quam inter haec habet ipse propriam, caeteris animalibus non communem, ea religio est, per religionem igitur est perfectissimus.”

handed moralizing.”⁴ The famous testimony of Fra Zenobi Acciaiuoli in the early sixteenth century concerning a significant influence of Antoninus on the young Ficino, who was given an antidote by Antoninus against his fall into Platonic paganism and was sent to read Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa contra gentiles*, was probably taken too seriously by Della Torre, but as a reaction, this important first-hand evidence was too easily dismissed by Kristeller on the basis of Acciaiuoli’s weak memory.⁵ This is one more piece of evidence for the need to contextualize the writings of Ficino in terms of his close scholastic circle, thus breaking the sharp distinction which was created by many modern scholars between Renaissance humanists and Renaissance scholastics.

In what follows I shall offer a more cautious look at the dichotomy presented by Peter Howard between what he calls “academic theology” on the one hand and “practical, not speculative theology”, stemming from the preacher’s mentality and pastoral concerns, to which he relates Antoninus’ theology, on the other.⁶ I shall try to show that Antoninus’ practical emphasis, as found in his moral thought, contains also important speculative elements, and thus a dichotomy between ‘practical’ and ‘speculative’ is not relevant to a discussion of Antoninus’ theology. In other words, the term ‘practical’ should not be understood by any means as contrasted to ‘speculative’ in Antoninus’ theology, which should be contextualized in terms of late scholastic moral psychology. Antoninus does represent a new tone of thinking which can be placed in the Dominican tradition somewhere between Thomas Aquinas and Girolamo Savonarola, i.e., between highly speculative theology and a pragmatic manifestation of the role of the Dominican friar (as a preacher, a confessor, and a spiritual leader) in society and politics, mainly in the years following the

4 Arthur Field, *The Origins of the Platonic Academy of Florence* (Princeton 1988), p. 136.

5 The relations between Antoninus and Ficino are discussed in Kristeller, *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* (Rome 1984), pp. 171, 200–201. Here are the words of Zanobi Acciaiuoli from the preface to his version of Theodoretus sponsored by pope Leo X, cited by Kristeller (who is citing Arnaldo Della Torre’s *Storia dell’Accademia platonica di Firenze* (Florence 1902), p. 518) on p. 201: “Marsilius Ficinus... saepe mihi dicere inter loquendum solebat factum providentia Florentini praesulis Antonini quo minus e Platonis lectione quam inde a pueris summo opere adamavit in perniciosam heresim prolapsus fuerit. Bonus enim pastor cum adulescentem clericum suum nimio plus captum Platonis eloquentia cerneret, non ante passus est in illius philosophi lectione frequentem esse, quam eum Divi Thomae Aquinatis quattuor libris contra gentes conscriptis quasi quodam antipharmaco premuniret.” On the relation between Aquinas and Ficino see Ardis B. Collins, *The Secular Is Sacred: Platonism and Thomism in Marsilio Ficino’s Platonic Theology* (The Hague 1974).

6 Howard, *Beyond the Written Word*, pp. 3–4.

council of Constance (1414–1418).⁷ This new tone is the result of a unique synthesis between more theoretical theologians from Thomas until the time of Antoninus himself, and a more practical tradition of summists, canonists, and authors of manuals for confessors.⁸ Antoninus stands, more or less, in the

7 The status and function of the Dominican friar in the Renaissance city-state and his relations to social and political matters is one of the key issues discussed in the writings of Giovanni Caroli, a follower of Antoninus who is a prominent representative of the next generation of Dominican friars in Florence. On Caroli see Chapter Three in this volume.

8 In the prologue to the whole *Summa* Antoninus presents his main authorities; see *Summa theologica*, vol. 1, pp. 5–6: “Quae autem inducuntur testimonia ad probationem dictorum, ultra auctoritates divinarum scripturarum, et sacrorum canonum, quae frequenter apponuntur et sententias proprias antiquorum doctorum Ecclesiae, Augustini, Hieronymi, Gregorii, Ambrosii, Chrysostomi, Basilii, Isidori, Bernardi, Anselmi etc, aliquando gentiliū, Platonis, Aristotelis, Tullii, et Senecae, adjiciuntur determinationes et dicta multorum modernorum in Theologia vel jure peritissimorum, quorum haec sunt nomina. In Theologia sanctus Thomas, quem omnibus praepono in suis dictis, Albertus magnus, Petrus de Palude, Petrus de Tharantasia, qui fuit Innocentius quintus, Durandus, Hugo Cardinalis, Guilielmus speculator in summa vitiorum et virtutum, Dominus Joannes Dominici Cardinalis de Florentia, Raynerius in summa Pisana, Vincentius in speculo historiali ordinis praedicatorum omnes isti praenominati, Bonaventura Cardinalis, Ricardus de media villa, Alexander de Hales, Joannes Scotus, Nicolaus de Lyra ordinis minorum, Augustinus de Roma in quodlibetis, Augustinus de Ancona de potestate Ecclesiae, Gregorius de Arimino ordinis Eremitarum. In jure in glossa decreti: Hugo, Bartholus Brixienis, Bernardus. In glossa decretalium: Raymondus ordinis praedicatorum in summa sua antiqua, Innocentius quartus, Hostiensis in apparatu et summa, Guilielmus in speculo, Archidiaconus in Rosario, Joannes Andreas in novella: et in glossa sexti, et Clementinarum, Joannes de Lignano, Joannes Calderinus, Joannes de Imola omnium novissimus doctor, Petrus de Ancharano, Laurentius de Ridolfis in tractatu de usuris, Franciscus de Zabarellis, Nicolaus Abbas de Sicilia, Antonius de Butrio, Petrus ordinis minorum in directorio juris, Lapus de castelli, Federicus de Senis in consilio, Bartholomaeus Baldus. De historiis exempla ponuntur: Gregorius in dialogo, Vincentius in speculo, Martinus in chronicis, Valerius maximus, Paullus, Orsius, De vita partum de vita fratrum, de septem donis, allegantur et multi alii sapientes; sed quia non ita frequenter, ipsos non curavi nominare.” For a discussion of this passage and some of these authorities see Howard, *Beyond the Written Word*, pp. 43–72. One should notice that Antoninus distinguishes between theological sources (*in theologia*) on the one hand (among which Thomas is the most prominent), and juridical (*in jure*) and more practical sources on the other hand; the classifications of his sources (chronologically, thematically, or according to the religious order to which an author belongs) show historical and contextual sensitivities, together with great openness and awareness of the rich philosophical, theological, juridical, and pastoral heritage up to his own day, in what seems to be first-hand knowledge of most of these authorities. The last remark, regarding the fact that only the most frequently mentioned authorities are presented here in the prologue, reads almost like a modern remark at the beginning of a bibliographical list.

middle between theory and practice, and, *pace* Howard, his moral theology is not only practical, and reflects not merely a “preaching mentality”,⁹ nor is it in any way contrasted to theoretical and speculative aspects of moral theology and moral thought, where practical reasoning naturally plays an essential role.

2 Antoninus’ Theology as Theology for non-Theologians

There can be little doubt regarding the fact that Antoninus’ formation was shaped by two events which had shaken the Christian world of his time: the Great Schism of 1378–1417 and the Dominican observant reform movement, introduced in Italy by Antoninus’ mentor cardinal Giovanni Dominici.¹⁰ These events gave a sense of urgency to Antoninus’ thought due to a concrete need for reestablishing moral theology on a solid ground, starting anew from the

9 “A Preaching Mentality” is the title of the second part of Howard’s book, *Beyond the Written Word*, pp. 75–189. In the prologue to part two of the *Summa* we find a concern not only for the practical aspect of the *modus praedicationis*, but also for the more theoretical or speculative aspect of the *modus doctrinae*. See Antoninus, *Summa theologica*, vol. 2, p. 1: “Nunc autem, quia in materia morali sermones particulares sunt utiliores, ideo in hac secunda parte agetur de singulis vitiis in particulari, primo per modum praedicationis, deinde per modum doctrinae.” This is cited also by Howard, *Beyond the Written Word*, p. 67, n. 99.

10 On the Great Schism, the council of Constance, and the tension between the conciliarists and the papists, see, e.g., John Holland Smith, *The Great Schism 1378* (London 1970); Phillip H. Stump, *The Reforms of the Council of Constance (1414–1418)* (Leiden 1994); Brian Tierney, *Foundations of the Conciliar Theory. The Contribution of the Medieval Canonists from Gratian to the Great Schism* (Leiden 1998); Joëlle Rollo-Koster, *Raiding Saint Peter: Empty Sees, Violence, and the Initiation of the Great Western Schism (1378)* (Leiden 2008). On Giovanni Dominici see e.g., Nirit Ben-Aryeh Debby, ‘Political Views in the Preaching of Giovanni Dominici in Renaissance Florence, 1400–1406’, in *Renaissance Quarterly* 55 (2002), pp. 19–48. On some of the stormy events concerning the Dominican observant reform movement see e.g., Daniel Antonin Mortier, *Histoire des maîtres généraux de l’Ordre des frères prêcheurs*, IV (Paris 1909), pp. 387–402; Raymond Creytens o.p., ‘La déposition de Maître Martial Auribelli OP par Pie II (1462)’, in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* XLV (1975), pp. 147–200. A later stage in the dispute concerning the reform and the tensions between the vicar-general of the Lombard congregation Thomas de Leuco and the master-general of the Order Auribelli is discussed in A. M. D’amato o.p., ‘Vicende dell’osservanza regolare nella congregazione Domenicana di Lombardia negli anni 1469–1472’, in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* XV (1945), pp. 52–101. The history of the Lombard congregation can be found in Creytens and D’amato, ‘Les Actes Capitulaires de la congrégation Dominicaine de Lombardie (1482–1531)’, in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* XXXI (1961), pp. 213–306. See also Howard’s remarks in his *Beyond the Written Word*, pp. 37–38.

foundations: the human soul, sins, and virtues. These three elements, which are all interconnected by another term, action, and constitute the basis of Antoninus' moral psychology, occupy a prominent place in his description of the structure of the *Summa*, his general scheme, as presented in the prologue to the whole work:

And in the first part some general issues [are discussed], namely the soul and its faculties, [and things] which are related to these issues, such as the passions as their origins; sins in general and their effects; the various laws in which vices [evil acts] are prohibited and virtues [good acts] are promoted. In the second part [we discuss issues] concerning vices according to their classification, namely the eight capital [vices] and their 'daughters' and species; restitution, oath, and perjuries; vows and their transgressions; infidelity and its species and superstitions, by offering specific descriptions of individual vices, and then those vices which belong to cases of conscience or to exposition of material. And according to each theme a verse of the Psalms is chosen which is most at hand and more in use in the Church, and is more compendious in doctrine with regard to each subject. In the third part [we discuss issues] concerning various conditions both of lay people and clerics; churches and individual sacraments; ecclesiastic censorships, and the conditions of the purified and the blessed. In the fourth part [we discuss issues] concerning virtue in general, and according to species, i.e., cardinal and theological virtues and their parts, or matters which are related to these [virtues]. And if time permits, the seven gifts and grace will be discussed.¹¹

11 Antoninus, *Summa theologica*, vol. 1, p. 5: "Et in prima parte quaedam generalia, videlicet de anima et de potentiis ejus, quae subjecta eorum habentur. De passionibus tamquam principiis eorum. De peccatis in genere et effectibus eorum. De multiplicibus legibus, quibus vitia prohibentur et virtutes praecipiuntur. In secunda parte de vitiis in specie, videlicet de octo capitalibus et eorum filiabus et speciebus. De restitutione. De juramento et perjuriis. De votis et transgressionibus eorum. De infidelitate et speciebus earum et superstitionibus. Ad singula vitia singulas praedicationes ponendo, et postea quae pertinent ad casus conscientiae vel declarationem materiae. Et pro themate sumitur versus psalmi, qui magis in promptu occurrit, et magis Ecclesiae in usu, et compendiosior in doctrina ad omnem materiam. In tertia parte de statibus variis tam laicorum quam clericorum. De Ecclesiis et sacramentis singulis, et de censuris ecclesiasticis, et statibus purgatorum et beatorum. In quarta parte de virtute in genere et specie. De virtutibus, scilicet Cardinalibus et Theologicis in specie, et de earum partibus, seu eis annexis. Et si tempus erit, agetur de septem donis et gratia." This passage is cited and translated in

Obviously, parts one (on the soul), two (on vices), and four (on virtues), are the most relevant to a discussion of Antoninus' moral psychology, where we have the following general scheme: the human soul with its faculties or internal powers is the driving force behind the agent's actions; these actions are then classified as evil actions or sins, and as good actions or virtues. Thus, the first aim of the intellect, for instance, is—following Isaiah 7, 15—to teach us how to reject evil and choose the good.¹²

Antoninus opens his general prologue by pointing out three attributes of God: power (*potentia*), wisdom (*sapientia*), and benevolence (*benevolentia*).¹³ In his discussion of divine wisdom, while commenting on Psalms 103, we find the important image of the world as a book full of divine wisdom from which we should learn, since God created everything through His divine wisdom which can be found everywhere: *omnia in sapientia fecisti* (Psalms 103, 24), even in the smallest creatures like ants.¹⁴ Confessing his own autodidactic and rather limited formal education, the archbishop compares his method in the *Summa* to the work of an ant:

I confess that I did not have a teacher in matters of grammar except in my childhood, and he was a feeble teacher. I had no [teacher] in any other subject except in a section of dialectics, and [even these studies were]

Howard, *Beyond the Written Word*, pp. 62–63. I have consulted Howard's translation and modified it.

- 12 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 47: "Primo igitur intellectus debet esse discretivus, discernendo falsa a veris, bona a malis, ut vera et bona eligat, et falsa et mala reprobet; ideo dicit: *sicut columbarum*. Unde columba discernit grana, quae sunt bona, et sana comedit, corrupta dimittit, sic egit Dominus Jesus juxta illud Isai. 7. *sciat reprobare malum et eligere bonum*."
- 13 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 1. These three attributes are mentioned, e.g., in Bonaventure's *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* 1, 10: "Relucet autem Creatoris summa potentia et sapientia et benevolentia in rebus creatis, secundum quod hoc tripliciter nuntiat sensus carnis sensui interiori."
- 14 *Ibid.*, pp. 2–3: "*Omnia utique in sapientia fecisti*. Demum ipse mundus est velut quidam liber scriptus intus et foris, qui docet nos sapientiam, non solum de divinis cognitionem, secundum illud Rom. 1. *Invisibilia enim ipsius, scilicet Dei, a creatura mundi, per ea, quae facta sunt, intellecta conspiciuntur* (Romans 1, 20); sed etiam docet sapientiam de agendis secundum illud Jobi 12. *Loquere, et respondebit tibi. Interroga jumenta, et docebunt te, et volatilia caeli, et indicabunt tibi. Loquere terre, et respondebit tibi, et narrabunt pisces maris* (Job 12, 7–8), da omnibus praeceptum, quod posuit, ut faciant, ad quod creata sunt, numquam praetereunt, se aliis communicant, terra fructificat et arbores et nil otiosum, et multa et innumera documenta nobis tribuunt ex proprietatibus suis ad bene vivendum; et sic *omnia in sapientia fecisti*, idest ad dandum nobis sapientiam ex eis: Ecclesiastes 1. *Effudit eam, scilicet sapientiam, super omnia opera sua* (Ecclesiasticus 1, 10), et in minimis animalibus, ut formicis."

often interrupted. Nor did I have a teacher who could teach a subject in the form of lectures. Yet I was attracted by eagerness and by the sweetness of truth, especially of moral wisdom, [and] out of these things which happened to be available to me for reading, I have collected a few which seemed to me agreeable. For [even] an ant does not collect every provision it finds, nor the more precious provisions, but [only] these [provisions] which [the ant] knows that are suitable to itself. I therefore have left those sublime theories which are held in bookchests to masters who are perfect in science; but those matters which I regard as proper materials for sermons and for the hearing of confession, and for consultation in the forum of souls—those I have accepted from many doctors in theology or learned scholars in the law. It was not my intention, being unlearned and ignorant in every science, to create new compositions, but only to make a collection [of material I have gathered] out of love of friars, for myself and others just like me, who were with me [and] have no talent for higher studies, nor did they always have an abundance of books, and [their] occupations took away from them the faculty of rushing to books for help.¹⁵

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- 15 *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4: “Ducem fateor me non habuisse in grammaticalibus, nisi in pueritia, et debilem praeceptorem. Nullum habui in alia facultate, excepta parte dialecticae, et satis interrupte; sed nec Principem mihi studium imperantem ex praelatione. Aviditate tamen et suavitate tractus veritatis, praecipue moralis sapientiae, ex his, quae mihi occurrerunt legenda, pauca recollegi mihi grata. Neque enim formica omnia inventa cibaria collegit, nec pretiosiora, sed quae novit sibi congrua. Illas igitur sublimes theorias in librariis comprehensas, magistris et scientia perfectis dimisi. Quae autem iudicavi apta ad materias praedicationum et audientiam ad confessionem, et consultationem in foro animarum, accepi a doctoribus pluribus in Theologia vel iureperitis, non intendens indoctus et omnis scientiae ignarus poemata condere, sed recollectionem facere amore fratrum pro me et meis similibus, qui mecum erant, quibus nec ingenium ad altiora, nec librorum semper copia datur, et occupationes facultatem subtrahunt ad discurrendum per libros.” Compare the role of the ant here to the role of the pigeon in the citation in n. 12 above. The first two sentences are cited and translated in Howard, *Beyond the Written Word*, p. 35. It might be relevant to cite here Antoninus’ own definition of dialectics; see *ibid.*, p. 35: “Dialectica ipsa est, quae proprie dicitur Logica, idest rationalis diffiniendi, quaerendi, differendi potens.” Antoninus’ approach here should be contrasted with the more systematic approach to moral discussions which is represented, e.g., by a contemporary thinker, Niccolò Tignosi; see *Nicolai Tignosii Fulginatis ad Cosmam Medicem in illos qui mea in Aristotelis comentaria criminantur opusculum*, in Sensi, ‘Niccolò Tignosi da Foligno. L’opera e il pensiero’, p. 472: “Prius igitur edificant quae de moribus est disciplina, quam eos arguant qui de moralibus dogmatibus claras sententias protulerunt. Quisque bene iudicat quae cognoscit; et secundum subiectam materiam recte loquitur. Cum hi sint moribus alieni inter tractandas materias minime distinguentes, nec iudicium ferre possunt,

But even the works of ants should not be underestimated since, as we have seen (n. 14), they represent God's works and thus are a reflection of divine wisdom. In the same way, by comparing himself to an ant, Antoninus still regards his own work of collecting material for his *Summa*, if not as divine, at least as valuable. Antoninus is in fact referring here to the urgent need for a new theological tone which should combine theory and practice, theology and canon law, without being too technical, abstract, or specialized, a theology which might be read and understood by common friars and other readers who are not professional theologians.¹⁶ It is important to notice that the critique of the rigidity and obscurity of many scholastic discussions in the manner of the disputed questions, quodlibetal questions or the *Sentences* commentaries can be found not only in Petrarch but also among the scholastic thinkers themselves. We can mention here, for instance, the reaction of Richard FitzRalph (c.1300–1360) against the scholastic-Aristotelian discourse, or Jean Gerson (1363–1429), who used in some of his writings a more simple and personal style, which was addressed to uneducated readers and listeners, local priests and simple believers, who were interested in getting to know some basic theological principles.¹⁷ It is tempting to regard this new theological tone of Antoninus as “theology for non-theologians”, following Eugenio Garin's classical critique of Gentile's definition of the philosophical writings of the humanists as “philosophy of non-philosophers”.¹⁸ This does not mean that Antoninus was not highly esteemed

nec officium comentantis sua sententia definire. Propterea bonum est, ut Minothaurum laberintus, sic eos inextricabilis error intra sese dubios contingat et obscuros. Nequaquam dubium est vias syllogisticas in naturalibus, altissimisque scientiis utillimas, ac necessarias reperiri, quando adversus veritatem aliqui cavillantur.”

- 16 The technical Dominican term is *fratres communes*, referring to those friars who received only conventual education and were occupied most of their time with the basic Dominican-parochial tasks: preaching and hearing confessions. On the *fratres communes* and their formation see Mulchahey, “*First the Bow is Bent in Study*”. *Dominican Education before 1350*, especially pp. 130–218. See also Howard's remarks in his *Beyond the Written Word*, pp. 36–41. We should remember, however, that the meaning of the term *fratres communes* and their formation might have been different from what it was in the period covered by the detailed study of Mulchahey. This issue deserves further study.
- 17 On Richard FitzRalph's critique of scholasticism see W. A. Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge 1955), pp. 132–133. I would like to thank Michael Dunne for this reference. On Jean Gerson see Brian P. Macquire, *Jean Gerson and the Last Medieval Reformation* (Pennsylvania 2005), e.g., pp. 37–40.
- 18 Garin, *Medioevo e Rinascimento*, pp. 38–39: “Onde non è forse del tutto nel vero—almeno nell'espressione—neppure quello che ebbe a dire il Gentile, dell'Umanesimo eloquentissimo ed incomparabile evocatore, essere quella degli umanisti inconsapevole filosofia di non filosofi—poeti, letterati, giuristi, politici e, magari, predicatori e profeti—che si

by his contemporaries as a competent theologian: quite the opposite, if we consider pope Pius II's or Vespasiano da Bisticci's descriptions, for instance.¹⁹ Now to some detailed account of Antoninus' moral psychology.

3 Moral Psychology in Antoninus' *Summa*

Antoninus compares the human soul, from the point of view of its natural qualities, to God, basing the comparison on nine points: it is one in its essence; it is triple in its faculties, containing memory, intelligence, and will; it is simple and has no members; it is immortal; it is invisible; it is everywhere in the body just as God is everywhere in the universe; it is the origin of its genus just as God is the origin of the world; it is happy, being naturally fit for taking part in its own beatitude; it is intellectual in its nature and has the capacity of understanding

opponere e distruggeva la filosofia dei filosofi; e povera cosa in sé—cioè filosoficamente parlando—la logica del Valla, l'etica del Salutati, del Bruni, del Manetti, o la retorica di un Poliziano. Se questa fosse stata proprio non-filosofia, e cioè solo retorica e poesia e letteratura e omelia, la filosofia vera non si sarebbe scrollata per invettive e scherni, assai più antichi del 300 e del 400. La verità è che proprio quella cosiddetta non-filosofia era la filosofia nuova nel suo nascimento, concezione davvero nuova della realtà intesa *sub specie hominis*, e cioè in termini di libertà e volontà e attività; non un mondo immoto, definito in tutte le sue articolazioni, non una storia tutta scontata, ma operata, e miracoloso trasformare il tutto, e rischio e, insomma, virtù.”

- 19 Enea Silvio Piccolomini (Pius II), *I commentarii*, 2 vols., ed. L. Totaro (Milan 1984), vol. 1, pp. 356–358: “Per idem tempus migravit in Domino Antonius ecclesiae Florentinae archiepiscopus, ordinis Praedicatorum professor, vir memoria dignus: domuit avaritiam, calcavit superbiam, libidinem prorsus ignoravit, potu ciboque parcissime usus est; non irae, non invidiae, non alteri passioni succubuit. Doctrina theologica emicuit: scripsit plura volumina quae docti laudant”; Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Le vite*, 2 vols., ed. A. Greco (Florence 1970 (vol. 1), 1976 (vol. 2)), vol. 1, 233: “Ocorse in questo tempo, sendo a Roma, che molti cardinali et prelati avevano dubbi di casi di conscientia, tutti venivano all'arcivescovo Antonino, et a tutti soddisfaceva mirabilmente. Per la sua buona dottrina et per la santità della vita et per la inviolabile sua conscientia, acquistò tanto in questo tempo istete a Roma, et col pontefice et con tutto il collegio de' cardinali, che, se non fussi istata la sua grande resistentia fece col pontefice et al collegio de' cardinali, difficilmente si sarebbe difeso di non essere fatto cardinale, se non fussi che al pontefice et al collegio dimostrò questo non fare per lui, et non potere venire a questa dignità, senza grandissimo pericolo della salute dell'anima sua.” On Antoninus' reputation for solving cases of conscience see Creytens, ‘Les cas de conscience soumis a s. Antonin de Florence par Dominique de Catalogne O.P.’, in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* XXVIII (1958), pp. 149–220; ‘Les “consilia” de s. Antonin de Florence O.P.’, in *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* XXXVII (1967), pp. 203–342.

infinite things, and it is naturally willing the good and infinite good.²⁰ The second and the ninth of these points are most relevant to moral psychology. In the second point Antoninus is following Augustine, who emphasized these three mental qualities in man and distinguished between them. One needs to understand a thing in order to remember and to want it, but understanding is distinct from memory and both are distinct from will.²¹ The ninth point brings understanding and willing into the picture as the main faculties of the soul. This comparison opens Antoninus' discussion of the soul in general (*De anima in communi*), where we find, e.g., that the soul has a natural understanding of its own weakness.²² This self-awareness of the soul brings us to yet another essential notion which is related to self-awareness: the notion of conscience.

While presenting ten common points of difference between man and beast,²³ Antoninus mentions, in his discussion of the fifth point (*per insulsam locutionem*), the notion of conscience:

Observe with regard to the fifth point that the first human being equally knew both the serpent's and the human languages, and he knew perfectly the difference between them. For the human voice was simple, and full of truth, melody, and God. "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh"—says Christ in Matthew 12. Certainly the first human being did not ignore the serpent's versatile and cunning language, which was deceitful, when he already realized that he himself had been deceived. Yet in [his] conscience he saw that he was lying in his conversation with God and that he dishonoured his Creator, just as that serpent did. He thus

20 Antoninus, *Summa theologica*, vol. 1, pp. 7–9.

21 Augustine, *De trinitate* X, 11, 17–18; 12, 19.

22 Antoninus, *Summa theologica*, vol. 1, p. 23: "...quod tamen [anima] per viam naturae scire potest, est sua infirmitas et potentiarum suarum debilis valitudo aut nulla." This, in fact, is the problem of *akrasia*, so familiar to us from Plato, Aristotle, and later Greek philosophers, and later on discussed by the Church Fathers and scholastic thinkers. On the problem of *akrasia* in the later tradition which is more relevant to Antoninus, see e.g., Hoffmann, Muller, Perkams (eds.), *The Problem of Weakness of Will in Medieval Philosophy*. And see Chapter Six, n. 22 below.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 26: "Hic autem prius nota, quod primus homo se fecit similem *jumentis insipientibus* per peccatum, per decem signa, quae cognovit, Per carnis rebellionem; Per primam operationem; Per Domini trepidationem; Per perditam speculationem; Per insulsam locutionem; Per mutatam nutritionem; Per novam inhabitationem; Per divinam separationem; Per mortis incursionem; Per pellium traditionem. Quamplures fuissent differentiae inter genus humanum et bruta, si non peccasset: sed istorum decem per experientiam sensit similem se brutis."

showed himself, according to Genesis 3, to be similar to the serpent by using insipid language.²⁴

Interestingly, the focus here is not on original sin itself, but rather on man's behaviour just after he sinned. In fact, the act of eating the forbidden fruit seems marginal; Antoninus is restructuring the narrative of Genesis 3 and concentrating on the first human being's awareness of two languages: one which comes from the heart (man's language) and another which is cunning and deceitful (serpent's language). Despite this awareness, man was not cautious enough, and instead of ignoring the serpent he listened to it, finding himself deceived. This is still part of the original sin. But worse is to come: faced by God's question, Adam used the serpent's language (which is described as *insulsa locutio*, the fifth point of similarity between man and beast, mentioned in n. 23), being well aware in his conscience that he is lying and dishonouring God. We can distinguish here between the harmonic and true language which emanates from the heart and the notion of conscience, an internal sense or criterion, which involves awareness and self-reflection on one's own words and deeds. The language of the heart represents harmony between internal intentions and external acts, it uses univocal meanings. The language of the serpent breaks this univocality between interior and exterior meaning, and between inner intentions and external acts. Words do not reflect the reality of actions or the inner psychological state of the agent. Adam, while using the serpent's language, tried to hide the fact that he had committed a forbidden action, and that he knew it in his heart and was perfectly aware of his action. This self-awareness of the contrast between his words and his actions, and between his words and his interior psychological state, is, according to Antoninus, due to Adam's conscience, where a process of judging one's own actions and awareness takes place. This is where awareness and knowledge—for instance, knowing about the two languages—becomes self-awareness and self-knowledge, facing the question of how the agent acted in the reality, how he manifested his knowledge, a self-judgment of his acts in their relation to his knowledge. Thus, conscience involves act and knowledge (or in fact, turning knowledge

24 *Ibid.*, pp. 26–27: “Quantum ad quintum adverte, quod expertus fuerat homo primus linguam serpentinam pariter et humanam, optimeque noverat earum distantiam. Erat enim vox hominis simplex, veritate, modulatione et Deo plena. *Ex abundantia enim cordis os loquitur* (Matthew 12, 34), ait Christus, Matth. 12. Linguam vero serpentinam versutam, fallacemque fuisse, non ignorabat, quum se jam sciret deceptum. Demum conscientia teste loquendo cum Domino mentiri et suum infamare auctorem, sicut ille serpens fecerat, se videbat, Gen. 3. et sic per insulsam locutionem se similem serpenti ostendit.”

into act)—and, most important, self-awareness of the agent as someone who truly or untruly acts according to his knowledge and awareness and is capable of giving a reliable linguistic account of his act, while using the language of the heart. This is the psychological drama behind the famous dialogue between God and Adam in Genesis 3, 9–11: “And the Lord God called Adam, and said to him: Where art thou? And he said: I heard thy voice in paradise; and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself. And he said to him: And who hath told thee that thou wast naked, but that thou hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?”

Let us examine now some other cases of *conscientia*, still in the first part of the *Summa*, and then pay closer attention to the term *scientia*, which is included in, and related to, *conscientia*, in this context of moral psychology.²⁵

Among Antoninus’ arguments for the immortality of the soul we find another mention of the concept of conscience:

And again in another letter [of Lucan Corduba we read]: we are not inhabitants of this world but rather foreigners, nor did we come to earth to remain in it, but to pass beyond it; indeed we hasten towards [our] fatherland not being loaded with burdens of sins: in fact we proceed without any shame of conscience, so that we would run down the itinerary with expedition and ease.²⁶

Conscience here represents a certain interiority, where shame caused by sinful acts is located. Under the burden of sin it is very difficult, if not impossible, to proceed on our way to our true fatherland while leaving this world.

25 See, for instance, Giovanni Caroli, *Liber dierum lucensium*, MS Florence, *Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale*, Conv. Suppr. C.8.279, ff. 1r–56v; ff. 55v–56r (from Book III, the speech of Antoninus): “Videte ne iam demum ad entia vestra nomina terminetis. Quod ita intelligi volo. Primi ac venerabiles ¶ [56r] patres vestri conscientia certe vixerunt, quod nomen sanctimoniam continet cum peritia litterarum. Reliqui vero cum iam fortasse conscientie pertesum esset, scientiam posthabitis aliis coluere.” On Caroli see Chapter Three above. Book Three of Caroli’s *Liber dierum* was published in Camporeale, “Giovanni Caroli—dal ‘Liber dierum’ alle ‘Vitae fratrum’”, in the appendix on pp. 218–233. The citation above is on p. 233.

26 Antoninus, *Summa theologica*, vol. 1, p. 44: “Et iterum in alia epistola [Lucani Cordubensis]: Nos non sumus incolae huius mundi, sed advenae, nec ita in orbem terrarum venimus, ut in eo libeat consistere, sed transire: properamus enim ad larem patriam nullis delictorum ponderibus gravati: nulla quidem conscientiae fronte progredimur, ut expediti ac faciles spatium propositi decurramus itineris.”

While mentioning the many different meanings of the word “soul” in Scripture according to Hugh of St-Cher,²⁷ we find in the eighth meaning that the soul can also mean conscience.²⁸ Once again we see that ‘conscience’ involves a process of judging and justifying. Cardinal Hugh’s list of different biblical meanings of the term ‘soul’²⁹ is essential for reconstructing Antoninus’ moral psychology and deserves a detailed scholarly attention which is beyond the scope of the present chapter.

But the main discussion of conscience in the first part of the *Summa* can be found in title 3, chapter 10 (*De conscientia*), following chapter 9 (*De synderesi*). Antoninus is following here the same sequence found in Thomas Aquinas’ *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*.³⁰ First of all one should determine what *synderesis* (συντήρησις) is and distinguish it from *conscientia*. *Synderesis* is not a potency or a faculty of the soul, but rather some habit of the soul, of which three things should be considered: its quiddity, sinlessness, and unquenchability.³¹ As for its quiddity or essence, *synderesis* is an innate habit or light with a special task or duty: to draw men away from evil by whispering in their ears words against sin and to turn them towards the good.³² It is the light of the agent intellect and it is essentially related to human actions; it is the natural light of practical principles (*principia operabilia*), which are universal principles of natural law; and so it stands against all evil and in agreement with all good.³³ More specifically, this natural light belongs to the third kind of rational activity in our soul, that is, judgment of credible or practical

27 *Ibid.*, p. 52: “Sciendum autem secundum Hugonem Cardinalem super ps. 33. quod anima in Scriptura sacra sumitur multipliciter.”

28 *Ibid.*, p. 53: “Octavo pro conscientia, ut illud Ecclesiastici 14. *Justifica animam tuam*, idest conscientiam.”

29 *Ibid.*, pp. 52–53.

30 *Ibid.*, pp. 177–204. For Thomas’ discussion see Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, qq. 16–17. And see also his *Summa theologiae* 1a, q. 79, aa. 12–13. For other accounts in the medieval context see e.g., Peter Lombard, *Sentences* 2, dist. 39; Bonaventure, *In Sent.* 2, dist. 39; Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* 1, q. 18; and John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* 2, dist. 39. For the later part of the scholastic tradition see e.g., Jean Gerson, *De theologia mystica* (Paris 1960–1973), pp. 160–161.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 177: “Synderesis non est potentia animae, sed quidam habitus. Circa quam tria possunt considerari, scilicet quidditas, impeccabilitas, et inextinguibilitas.”

32 *Ibid.*: “Et quantum ad primum sciendum, quod synderesis est quidam connaturalis habitus, sive connaturale lumen, cujus actus vel officium est homines retrahere a malo, murmurando contra peccatum, et inclinare ad bonum.”

33 *Ibid.*: “. . . sicut enim in anima nostra est aliquis habitus, vel aliquod lumen respectu cognoscibilium, quem habitum vocamus intellectum principiorum, scilicet lumen intellectus agentis; ita in anima nostra est quidam habitus naturalis, sive quoddam lumen

matters which pertain to good customs or proper behaviour.³⁴ In this case another distinction is required, between free choice (*liberum arbitrium*) and *synderesis*. While free choice means a judgment regarding a particular practical case, *synderesis* is a judgment regarding a practical case in general (*in universali*).³⁵ Antoninus refers here to Thomas, Alexander of Hales and Raynerius of Pisa, while very briefly remarking that, unlike *synderesis*, conscience is open to error and disturbance, while *synderesis* is not, although *conscientia* is reduced or brought down to *synderesis* according to each case.³⁶

What provisional and rather partial conclusion can we draw from the account of *liberum arbitrium*, *synderesis*, and *conscientia* we have had so far? We can say that *liberum arbitrium* has a more personal flavour, being related to *judicium de particulari*, and thus that it is somewhat closer to the modern

naturale principiorum operabilium, quae sunt universalia principia juris naturalis, quod scilicet lumen vocamus synderesim, quae omni malo resistit, et omni bono consentit.”

34 *Ibid.*: “Tertio modo ratio est iudicativa operabilium: et hoc duabus modis, videlicet vel operabilium, quae ad mores non spectant, et talis ratio non est synderesis; vel credibilium aut operabilium, quae pertineat ad bonos mores; et tale lumen naturale rationis dicitur synderesis.”

35 *Ibid.*: “Item liberum arbitrium non est idem, quod synderesis, quia liberum arbitrium habet iudicium de particulari operabili; synderesis autem de operabili iudicat in universali.” Compare Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, q. 16, a. 1: “... quod iudicium est duplex: in universali, et hoc pertinet ad synderesim; et in particulari operabili, et hoc est iudicium electionis, et hoc pertinet ad liberum arbitrium.” And compare Henry of Ghent’s overall account of the cognitive faculties and the will, and of *synderesis* and *conscientia*, in *Quodlibet* I, q. 18: “Sicut enim in cognitiva sunt lex naturalis ut universalis regula operandorum et ratio recta ut particularis, sic ex parte voluntatis est quidam universalis motor stimulans ad opus secundum regulas universales legis naturae, et dicitur ‘synderesis’, quae est in voluntate quaedam naturalis electio semper concordans cum naturali dictamine legis naturae, et ideo dicitur ‘synderesis’, hoc est ‘cum-electio’ a ‘syn’, quod est ‘cum’, et ‘haeresis’, ‘electio’, et quidam motor particularis stimulans ad opus secundum dictamen rationis rectae, et dicitur ‘conscientia’, quae est in voluntate quaedam electio deliberativa semper concordans cum dictamine rationis rectae; et ideo dicitur ‘conscientia’, hoc est ‘cum-scientia’, quia electio in voluntate deliberativa concordans cum scientia in ratione recta. Et semper formatur conscientia a consensu et electione liberae voluntatis iuxta iudicium et sententiam rationis, ut si sit ratio recta, recta est et conscientia, si sit ratio erronea, erronea est et conscientia.” Needless to say, Henry’s etymologies are as speculative as one could expect from anyone before the rise of historical linguistics in the nineteenth century.

36 *Ibid.*: “Sed nec synderesis est idem, quod conscientia; quia conscientia recipit errorem et perturbationem, non autem synderesis. Tamen conscientia ex parte superiori secundum rem reducitur ad synderesim. Thomas in 1. parte quaest. 79, art. 12. Et in quaestionibus de veritate. Et Alexander in 2. parte summae, Raynerius.”

notion of interiority in trying to deal with moral dilemmas, while *synderesis* which *iudicat de operabili in universali* has a more objective status, yet is still inferior to *conscientia*. The fact that *synderesis* is related to universal principles of natural law is yet another indication of its universal and non-personal nature.³⁷ And indeed, in the discussion of the second characteristic of *synderesis*, its sinlessness, Antoninus again explicitly follows Thomas and Raynerius in asserting that *synderesis* observes and imitates the superior part of reason, which cannot sin, and so also *synderesis* cannot sin.³⁸ But in this case can our soul be deprived of *synderesis*? In his account of the third characteristic of *synderesis*, its unquenchability, Antoninus declares that this is impossible, since the light of *synderesis*, which is like the light of the active intellect, through which speculative and practical matters (matters which are part of the soul's essence) are known to the soul, is an essential part of the soul's nature.³⁹ This immediately raises the issue of evil, and Antoninus declares that the fact that any inclination towards evil is removed from the blessed does not imply that *synderesis* among the condemned is withdrawn, since it inclines to the good. The reason for this is that evil is contrary to nature and thus nothing can prevent the blessed from removing the inclination towards evil, just as the tinder of evil or the fuel of evil (*fomes mali*) exists in the soul only accidentally, and so it would be possible to remove it by the excellence of grace, as in the case of the Holy Virgin. On the other hand good, and the inclination towards the good is the result of nature itself, and therefore, as long as our nature remains

37 The important tension between a more modern personal account, and a more traditional objective account of moral decisions involving the concept of conscience, in the contexts of Aristotelian-scholastic theories, Renaissance and Reformation thinkers, deserves further research. Thomas is clearer than Antoninus on this point of relating moral decisions of the *synderesis* to eternal reasons; see Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, q. 16, a. 1: "In ipso enim habitu universalium principiorum iuris continentur quaedam quae pertinent ad rationes aeternas, ut hoc quod est Deo esse obediendum..."

38 Antoninus, *Summa theologica*, vol. 1, p. 178: "...synderesis respicit et imitatur superiorem partem rationis...sed pars superior rationis peccare non potest; ergo nec synderesis. Thomas in quaestionibus de veritate, Raynerius."

39 *Ibid.*: "...et sic non potest synderesis extinguere, quia sicut impossibile est, quod anima privetur lumine intellectus agentis, per quod huiusmodi speculabilia et operabilia innotescunt, quum sint de essentia animae; ita impossibile est quod anima privetur lumine synderesis, quum sit de natura ipsius animae." Compare Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, q. 16, a. 3: "...et sic impossibile est quod synderesis extinguatur: sicut impossibile est quod anima hominis privetur lumine intellectus agentis, per quod principia prima in speculativis et operativis nobis innotescunt; hoc enim lumen est de natura ipsius animae, cum per hoc sit intellectualis..."

what it is, the inclination to good (= *synderesis*) cannot be removed even in the damned.⁴⁰

If we compare Antoninus' account of *synderesis* here to Thomas' *De veritate* q. 16, we find some interesting alterations to the scholastic discourse. Thomas' discussion is much more methodical and theoretical, while Antoninus' is more synthetic and categorical, presenting a shorter account of *synderesis* and leaving out of his discussion different nuances and implications. Thus, as we have seen, Antoninus discussed three aspects of *synderesis*, using the terms *quidditas*, *impeccabilitas*, and *inextinguibilitas*; Thomas' titles of the three articles are: *utrum synderesis sit potentia, vel habitus*; *utrum synderesis possit peccare*; *utrum synderesis in aliquo extingatur*. In his response to the first question Thomas presents different opinions and finally determines that *synderesis* is either a natural habit or a potency of reason with such habit, while admitting that there is not much of a difference between the two possibilities, and emphasizing that if it is to be regarded as potency of reason, it must have a natural habit.⁴¹ At the end of this article, Thomas explains the nature of a philosophical and natural composition, in case *synderesis* is indeed a compound of potency and habit.⁴² Before that he has made it clear that regarding *synderesis* as potency and habit does not mean that they are the same thing, but rather that this name—*synderesis*—means the same potency with a habit under which this potency is subsumed.⁴³ These remarks show that the answer to this

40 *Ibid.*: "Et sciendum, quod licet in beatis removeatur omnis inclinatio ad malum, non tamen per contrarium amovetur in damnatis synderesis inclinans ad bonum. Cujus ratio est, quia malum est praeter naturam, et ideo nihil prohibet inclinationem ad malum a beatis removeri, quum etiam fomes accidentaliter sit in anima, et possit exstingui per gratiae excellentiam, ut in B. Virgine. Sed bonum et inclinatio ad bonum consequitur ipsam naturam, et synderesis naturaliter est in anima." Compare Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, q. 16, a. 3: "... quod malum est praeter naturam, et ideo nihil prohibet inclinationem ad malum a beatis removeri. Sed bonum et inclinatio ad bonum consequitur ipsam naturam; unde natura manente, non potest inclinatio ad bonum tolli etiam a damnatis."

41 Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, q. 16, a. 1: "Restat igitur ut hoc nomen *synderesis* vel nominet absolute habitum naturalem similem habitui principiorum, vel nominet ipsam potentiam rationis cum tali habitu. Et quodcumque hoc fuerit, non multum differt; quia hoc non facit dubitationem nisi circa nominis significationem. Quod autem ipsa potentia rationis, prout naturaliter cognoscit, synderesis dicatur, absque omni habitu esse non potest; quia naturalis cognitio rationi convenit secundum aliquem habitum naturalem, ut de intellectu principiorum patet."

42 *Ibid.*: "Est etiam compositio *subiecti et accidentis*, in qua non resultat aliquid tertium ex utroque: et talis est compositio potentiae et habitus."

43 *Ibid.*: "... quod synderesis non dicitur significare potentiam et habitum quasi eadem res sit potentia et habitus; sed quia uno nomine significatur ipsa potentia cum habitu cui

question is not quite as obvious as presented by Antoninus, and that Thomas is inclined, slightly differently from Antoninus, to regard *synderesis* as a compound of potency of reason and a natural habit, and not simply as a habit.

Moving on to his account of conscience, Antoninus maintains that conscience is called spirit in so far as it is some precept of the mind. The fact that a habit is regarded as the origin of an act is reason enough for attributing the name 'conscience' to the first natural habit, that is *synderesis*. But in fact, conscience is an act.⁴⁴ Antoninus, following Thomas, argues that conscience's origin is in the natural judgment of reason, which is called the law of intellect. We can draw conclusions from this law by using a syllogism, in which *synderesis* posits the first premise, e.g. that all evil should be avoided; superior reason posits the middle premise, that adultery is evil since it is forbidden by God; and inferior reason posits that it is evil since it is against justice and honesty. Conscience then draws the conclusion, that adultery should be avoided, and it is therefore regarded almost as a 'concluding science' (*concludens scientia*).⁴⁵ The emphasis here is on the very practical role of conscience in inferring the final conclusion or act; this is a mental process which is unique to conscience and leads to action: *adulterium est vitandum*. Conscience functions here as a

substernitur." And see also *ibid.*, q. 16, a. 2: "Synderesis autem non nominat potentiam rationalem absolute, sed perfectam per habitum certissimum."

- 44 Antoninus, *Summa theologica*, vol. 1, p. 179: "Et sic conscientia dicitur spiritus, in quantum est quoddam dictamen mentis, quia etiam habitus est principium actus; ideo nomen conscientiae attribuitur aliquando primo habitui naturaliter, scilicet synderesi. Sicut Hieronymus super Ezechielem, conscientiam synderesim vocat. Sed conscientia proprie est actus." This is also Thomas Aquinas' conclusion in his *De veritate*, q. 17, a. 1.
- 45 *Ibid.*: "Habet autem ortum conscientia ex naturali iudicio rationis, quod dicitur lex intellectus, et ab eo est deducta et derivata ut quaedam conclusio, v.g. sit in animo vel in mente hominis quasi quidam syllogismus, cujus majorem praemittit synderesis dicens, omne malum esse vitandum. Minorem vero hujus syllogismi assumit ratio superior dicens, adulterium esse malum, quia prohibitum est a Deo. Ratio vero inferior dicit, adulterium esse malum, quia vel est injustum, vel quia est inhonestum. Conscientia vero infert conclusionem dicens et concludens ex supradictis: Ergo adulterium est vitandum. Propterea dicitur conscientia quasi concludens scientia, eo quod conscientia ratione supradictorum, scilicet synderesis, rationis superioris, et rationis inferioris conclusionem infert. Thomas in 2. Sententiarum, Dist. 24." Compare Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, q. 17, a. 2 (*responsum*). This is yet another pre-scientific 'creative etymology', relying on similarities in sound rather than on proper derivation. Latin 'conscientia' consists of the prefix 'con' (= 'cum', with) and the noun 'scientia', awareness. It is the counterpart of Greek συνείδησις, συν+εἶδησις in the same sense. It means 'awareness with' or 'inside' oneself. See, for instance, the Virgilian expression "mens sibi conscia recti": a mind aware within itself of what is right.

sylogistic conclusion of two more theoretical suppositions: 'any evil must be avoided' and 'adultery is evil'. And thus:

... it should be known that conscience indicates an application of our knowledge, or of our cognition, towards some particular act.⁴⁶

We have already seen that *liberum arbitrium* was related to *judicium de particulari*. Conscience in itself is not a judgment of particulars, but the conscience of each human being—just like his face—is particular and unique in its nature, and there can be no two similar consciences.⁴⁷ Antoninus is citing Hugh of St-Cher's definition according to which conscience is the science of the heart.⁴⁸ All this indicates a rather personal account of conscience, both in its peculiar internal nature and with regard to particular external acts. But what is the relation between conscience (*conscientia*) and science (*scientia*)?

Indeed when it has become acquainted with itself, it is called conscience, when it knows other things beyond itself, it is called science.⁴⁹

Conscience involves relating our cognition or knowledge or science to a particular act and considering whether to do or not to do a certain action; Antoninus provides a common use (*communis usus*) of the term 'conscience' according to which it is close to intention and to some kind of awareness to one's own behaviour. A citation from Genesis 43, 22, supports this meaning.⁵⁰ Conscience

46 *Ibid.*, p. 180: "... sciendum, quod conscientia significat applicationem nostrae notitiae, seu cognitionis ad aliquem actum particularem." Antoninus is here closely following Thomas; see *De veritate*, q. 17, a. 1 (*responsum*): "Nomen enim *conscientiae* significat applicationem scientiae ad aliquid; unde conscire dicitur quasi simul scire. Quaelibet autem scientia ad aliquid applicari potest; unde conscientia non potest nominare aliquem habitum specialem, vel aliquam potentiam, sed nominat ipsum actum, qui est applicatio cuiuscumque habitus vel cuiuscumque notitiae ad aliquem actum particularem."

47 *Ibid.*, p. 179: "Et dicitur conscientia facies ratione diversificationis; quia sicut inter tot homines non est dare duas facies omnimode similes, quod mirum est; ita nec duas conscientias omnino similes, idest in omnibus idem sentientes."

48 *Ibid.*, p. 180: "Unde Hugo in libro secundo de anima diffiniens eam sic ait: Conscientia est cordis scientia."

49 *Ibid.*: "Quando enim se novit, appellatur conscientia, quando praeter se alia noscit, appellatur scientia."

50 *Ibid.*: "Applicatur autem nostra notitia vel cognitio ad aliquem actum particularem tribus modis. Primo secundum quod cognoscimus, consideramus, an aliquis actus sit factus vel non. Ut quum dicitur in communi usu loquendi, hoc non est factum de conscientia mea,

has the power to dictate, being the witness of things done and undone, it can restrain the will and demand that it should not obey something. Conscience dictates whether something has to be done or not, and this ‘dictation’ is nothing but the arrival of a divine precept into an agent with conscience.⁵¹

Conscience as intention involving choice brings it once again very close to being a personal entity. It may even seem quite close to the Scotist notion of the will.⁵² According to Antoninus conscience binds not by way of compulsion but rather just like the will which is free and is its own master, and cannot be compelled by anything.⁵³ But at the same time it involves judgment, and it is connected to the active intellect and to natural reason which is related to the universal or natural principles. In this respect it seems less personal,

idest nescio, vel nescivi an hoc esset factum: secundum quod dicitur Gen. 43. *Non est conscientii nostris, quis posuerit pecuniam in saccis nostris*: vel etiam applicatur scientia vel cognitio nostra ad aliquod, quod sit factum, secundum quod dicitur Ecclesiastes 7. *Scit conscientia tua, quod tu crebro maledixisti aliis*.” Compare Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, q. 17, a. 1 (*responsum*).

- 51 *Ibid.*: “Dicitur autem conscientia esse testis factorum vel non factorum, in quantum conscientia retinet illud, contra quod voluntas fecit quasi voluntatem accusans de eo, quod sibi non obedit; et sic conscientia habet virtutem dictaminis. Dictat enim conscientia, an aliquid sit factum vel non. Istud autem dictamen nil aliud est, quam perventio praecepti divini ad eum, qui habet conscientiam.” The last words are adapted from Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate*, q. 17, a. 4 (*responsum*): “... quia conscientiae dictamen nihil est aliud quam perventio praecepti divini ad eum qui conscientiam habet...”
- 52 For the important developments among Scotist thinkers and their discussions of the will during the later part of the thirteenth century and the first decades of the fourteenth century, see the studies of Alliney cited in Chapter Two, n. 51. For a Scotist account of the will in the generation after Antoninus see Chapter Six.
- 53 Antoninus, *Summa theologica*, vol. 1, p. 184: “Ligare autem dicitur conscientia non quidem per modum coactionis, quia quum voluntas sit libera et sui ipsius domina, a nullo cogi potest.” But we should note that in the context before and after this citation Antoninus is closely following Thomas Aquinas’ *De veritate*, q. 17, a. 3 (*responsum*): “Unde, cum conscientia nihil aliud sit quam applicatio notitiae ad actum, constat quod conscientia ligare dicitur vi praecepti divini.” Compare with Giorgio Benigno Salviati’s dialogue *Fridericus, On the Prince of the Soul’s Kingship* discussed in Chapter Six. See also Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* I, q. 18: “Et quia conscientia non formatur nisi ex volentis libera electione, licet iuxta notitiam rationis, ex hoc contingit quod aliqui multam notitiam operandorum habentes, nullam vel modicam habent in se conscientiam de operando secundum scientiam, et hoc vel quia de operando nihil deliberant sed omnia praecipitanter agunt, vel si deliberant, libere tamen contra scientiam eligunt, et omnino ipsam respuunt, aut debiliter eam in eligendo sequuntur et contraria his quae noverunt, agunt. Unde omnes tales agunt contra scientiam sine omni conscientia remordente aut modica, solum habentes remorsum synderesin, quae omnino extinguere non potest.”

but nonetheless conscience might be regarded as an essential bridge between the two most important faculties in the human soul: the intellect and the will.⁵⁴ This can be one possible solution to the apparent, and sometimes over-emphasized, tension between the intellect and the will in scholastic and humanist circles.⁵⁵ Conscience is thus this unique act which is related, just like a long stick, at its one end or edge to some general principles of natural reason, which are of course related to, and perfected by, the divine precepts. But on its other end or edge it becomes very personal and individual: it is about doing the right thing in a particular case as an agent who uses intention, free choice, and judgment. Conscience takes part in the rational process of the intellect, analysing knowledge regarding proper behaviour, and in the dynamic act of choosing the proper particular moral action. This is the transformation from *scientia* to *conscientia*, and the way in which the intellect and the will are in fact working together in producing intentional, moral, and conscious acts. Now the critical tone we have found earlier in Caroli, presenting the words of the interlocutor in his dialogue Antoninus (n. 25) is better understood: "Your first and venerable fathers certainly lived with conscience; that term embraced sanctity together with the knowledge of the Scriptures. Now the rest, when they had become tired with this conscience, cultivated knowledge while neglecting other things." What exactly are those other neglected things which are added by conscience?

And so it is the same power or virtue through which both the precept and conscience are binding; since the precept does not bind without the power of knowledge or understanding. Neither would knowledge nor understanding of the precept bind without the power of the precept. It follows that, since conscience is nothing but the application of knowledge or understanding towards an act, it is agreed that conscience is said to bind with the power of divine precept.⁵⁶

54 Another example of this aspect of conscience can be found e.g., in Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* I, q. 18: "Agens enim contra conscientiam contemnit iudicium rationis et voluntatis inclinationem simul."

55 We shall see in Chapter Five an analysis of a debate concerning the intellect and the will in the generation after Antoninus.

56 Antoninus, *Summa theologica*, vol. 1, p. 184: "Et sic eadem virtus est, qua praeceptum ligat, et qua conscientia ligat, quum praeceptum non ligat nisi in virtute scientiae, vel notitiae. Nec scientia vel notitia praecepti ligaret, nisi per virtutem praecepti. Unde quum conscientia nil aliud sit, quam applicatio scientiae vel notitiae ad actum; constat, quod conscientia dicitur ligare in virtute divini praecepti." I would like to thank Michael Dunne for his remarks on this passage.

Virtue means here the power to bind something to something else. Knowledge and understanding of the command will have no real effect on the agent without the command having a binding power over us. Knowledge is the first step through which the agent is attached to the command, but it is not enough, and here is where conscience comes into the picture, being the application of knowledge or understanding towards an act, and having a unique quality of binding the acts of the agent with the power or virtue of divine command. In this way conscience is related to actions on the one hand (thus directing the agent's conscience to the application of his moral knowledge and understanding: a very practical aspect of it), and to the power or virtue of divine command on the other (thus relating the moral acting agent to the divine command). Conscience draws the agent down, as it were, from a theoretical moral understanding to real actions, while being able to bind those actions by using the power or virtue of divine command. In this way conscience is responsible for behaviour in a particular case, putting the moral understanding of a specific agent into action, but it is also responsible for relating this action to a universal divine command. Conscience is thus a descriptive concept of a certain behaviour (and so *actus* in this context should be understood more as a behaviour than as an act) of the agent, and it has no divine origin. Being the proper moral behaviour, it must be in agreement with the divine command, but essentially it reflects the agent's interiority, his good choices and judgments, intentions and awareness: in short, it reflects the agent's entire moral psychology when it functions properly.

This positive account of the role of conscience in producing moral actions is presented by Antoninus following a discussion of seven causes of error in conscience (ignorance, negligence, confused benevolence, pusillanimity of the heart, arrogance, perplexity, and modesty and purity of the heart),⁵⁷ and it is followed by a discussion of phrases like right conscience (*conscientia recta*) and sincere conscience (*conscientia sincera*).⁵⁸

Right conscience has a very unique way of binding us: it is not binding like God, in the manner of the first authority or a commanding judge, but rather by way of supposition or condition, that is, by way of attempting to attain some end. Thus, for instance, unless we do what conscience dictates, we would not reach our end which is salvation. And so conscience functions as an instrumental agent just like a court's herald, someone who brings the judge's or the prince's precept to the attention of the people. It is the essential mediator

57 *Ibid.*, pp. 182–183.

58 *Ibid.*, pp. 184–185.

between the divine precept and the agent (and thus between God and man), and only through this mediation can the precept be regarded as truthful.⁵⁹

There are four causes for praising right conscience: its goodness, purity, sincerity, and tranquility.⁶⁰ Focusing on the third cause we find that sincere conscience means acting or behaving without duplicity of intention,⁶¹ which is just what we would call sincere behaviour. Such sincerity brings the notion of conscience once again into a rather internal and personal territory, involving intention. As we shall see in our discussion of the fourth part of Antoninus' *Summa*, this sincerity has a key role to play in his analysis of original sin, as well as in the analysis offered by the authorities he cites here. And yet we find another important image used by Antoninus for right conscience: the image of a house.⁶² This image is also present, as we shall see, in the fourth part of the *Summa*. We also have here the same image of the house of conscience supported by the four cardinal virtues: temperance, wisdom, justice, and courage.⁶³ God is the chief builder of this house, not man.⁶⁴ Antoninus mentions seven columns sustaining the house of conscience and stemming from wisdom, which are conditions for true penitence: sollicitude, longing, defending, indignation or inclination against one's own committed sin, fear, emulation, and vengeance.⁶⁵ Our archbishop then mentions free choice:

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- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 184: "Nec ligat etiam conscientia per modum principalis auctoris; sic enim ligat Deus praeceptis, sicut iudex praecepit; sed ligat per modum suppositionis seu conditionis, scilicet per modum consecutionis alicujus finis, puta nisi faciat hoc, quod conscientia dictat, non consequetur finem suum, idest salutem. Ligat etiam per modum instrumentalis agentis sicut praeco, qui velut instrumentum iudicis praeceptum iudicis ad notitiam hominis deducit: et si praeceptum iudicis vel regis non perveniret ad populum nisi aliquo pracone vel principe mediante; tunc si praeco vel princeps diceret: hoc est praeceptum a rege et est verum, tunc omnes dictum illius obligaret. Et hoc modo ligat recta conscientia."
- 60 *Ibid.*, p. 185: "Est autem conscientia recta laudabilis et appetenda propter quattuor causas, scilicet propter bonitatem, puritatem, sinceritatem, et tranquillitatem."
- 61 *Ibid.*: "Tertio laudabilis est conscientia sincera, scilicet sine duplicitate intentionis..."
- 62 *Ibid.*, p. 186: "Notandum quod conscientia recta in Scriptura aliquando domus dicitur."
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 188: "Solatia hujus domus sunt quattuor, de quibus dicitur Sapient. 8. *Sobrietatem, et sapientiam docet justitiam, et virtutem, quibus utilis nihil est in vita hominibus*. Est igitur primum solatium sobrietas, seu temperantia, quae facit abstinere a superfluis delectationibus, et in hoc solatio sunt plures camerae, sive officinae, sive virtutes ei annexae, de quibus nunc non oportet dicere brevitatis causa. Secundum solatium dicitur sapientia... Tertium est justitia... Quartum est virtus, idest fortitudo in perferendis molestiis cum suis cameris, idest virtutibus annexis."
- 64 *Ibid.*: "Hanc tamen domum conscientiae non tu, sed principaliter Deus aedificat."
- 65 *Ibid.*: "*Septem autem columnas sapientia excidit* ad stabiliendum et sustentandum domum conscientiae; alias propter diversos impulsus vitiorum corrueret. Et sunt hae

Therefore Christ cuts off from Himself in His own wisdom these seven columns which sustain the house of conscience: yet man while proposing to dwell in the house of conscience by using [his] free choice, still sets in support of it those columns. And so go to the Lord in order to add or restore columns of this sort. Those columns can also be regarded as the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁶

Antoninus sets here the relation between God and man in regard to conscience. As we have seen earlier, God is mainly the builder of the house of conscience, and as we see here, Christ is responsible for the seven supporting columns of this house. But man can choose whether to dwell in the house of conscience or not.

While discussing these seven laudable fruits of conscience we find in the third and in the sixth fruit the notion of conscience as some interiority or an internal truth.⁶⁷ This interiority which is symbolized by a house is instructed, according to Antoninus' remark on the fourth fruit, by the examples of the saints.⁶⁸ Following Albert the Great (who follows a famous Aristotelian distinction with some modifications) Antoninus presents an interesting distinction between *scientia* and *fides*: while knowledge is related to those matters which are known through their causes and cannot be otherwise than the

septem columnae, septem conditiones verae poenitentiae, quas ponit Apostolus 2. ad Cor. 7. dicens: *Quae enim secundum Deum tristitia est, poenitentiam in salutem stabilem operatur... Operatur enim in nobis sollicitudinem, sed desiderium, sed defensionem, sed indignationem, sed timorem, sed aemulationem, sed vindictam*, secundum Hugonem Cardinalem." And see the more detailed account of the seven columns, *ibid.*, pp. 188–189.

66 *Ibid.*, p. 189: "Has igitur septem columnas domum conscientiae sustentantes, sapientia Christus excidit ex se procedentes: proponens etiam homo per liberum arbitrium in domo conscientiae habitare, supponit has etiam columnas. Vade ergo in dominum ad huiusmodi columnas supponendum vel reficiendum. Possunt etiam intelligi per has columnas septem dona Spiritus sancti." An anonymous reader of this book has suggested that one should emend *excidit* to *excitavit* in the sense of raising up. But compare this sentence with the citation in n. 106 below where we have "divina sapientia per se ipsam tres alias his fortiores excidit..."

67 *Ibid.*, p. 190: "Et ideo dicit bis *pulchra: oculi tui columbarum* per diligentem circumspectionem, *absque eo, quod intrinsecus latet*, scilicet in conscientia per bonorum ornatum, scilicet propositionem"; "Unde Gregorius super Ezechielem: Quid prodest, si omnes laudent, et conscientia accuset, aut quid poterit obesse, si omnes derogent, et conscientia defendat? Et Bernardus super Can. Omnino sufficit adversum nos loquentium iniqua, opinio bonorum cum testimonio conscientiae."

68 *Ibid.*, p. 191: "Quantum ad quantum de ornatu domus requiritur, quod sit picturata, scilicet exemplis sanctorum edocta."

way they are, faith is perfect conviction through many probable arguments or authority, and this is called credulity and conscience.⁶⁹ Once again we see the relation between conscience and some inner conviction, while the notion of conscience itself is regarded as a human activity, involving probability and authority.

Conscience as an inner conviction is the result of probable arguments and the use of authorities in a process which involves different opinions and an act of interpretation, and it requires a criterion by means of which we would be able to choose the more probable opinions and reject the wrong ones and, more important, a criterion for detecting probable opinions and true doctrine. In his discussion of the seven rules through which anxious and erroneous conscience can be put aside and thus be saved⁷⁰ Antoninus, in his comments on the sixth rule, is describing precisely such a process. Since moral matters involve different and contrary opinions, it is not easy to make the right choice and follow the right opinion; it is at least possible for anyone to follow a false opinion which is contrary to a true one. But in this case, claims our archbishop, if someone is in doubt regarding his own behaviour, and if his actions do not involve mortal sin, it is enough to follow the opinion of any Doctor of the Church and to hold probable arguments which can be argued for and against (Antoninus is using here the technical Academic phrase *ad utramque partem* which he found in Cicero and Augustine), as long as this opinion is not contradicted by the clear testimony of Scripture or a decision of the Church.⁷¹ These are the criteria through which we can distinguish probable opinions from true doctrine.

69 *Ibid.*, p. 193: "Nam scientia proprie est eorum, quae cognoscuntur per causam, et quia impossibile est aliter se habere. Fides autem est perfecta persuasio unius partis seu conclusionis per multa probabilia vel auctoritatem dicentem. Et hoc etiam appellatur credulitas et conscientia."

70 *Ibid.*, pp. 195–198.

71 *Ibid.*, p. 198: "Quum ergo in aliqua materia morali sunt variae et contrariae opiniones, ille, qui adhaeret opinioni latioris viae, videtur se exponere periculo mortalis, quia in dubio, quum possit illa opinio esse falsa, et contraria vera. Sed ad hoc respondetur, quod utique ille, qui agit scienter id, de quo dubitat esse mortale, permanente dubitatione mortaliter peccat, etiam si illud in se non esset mortale, sumendo proprie et stricte dubitationem, videlicet, prout rationes sunt aequae ponderantes ad utramque partem, nec magis declinat quis ad unam, quam ad aliam. Sed si dubitet leviter quis per modum scrupuli, sicut dubitat, seu formidat habens opinionem de aliquo, quia ita inhaeret ipsi sententiae, quod tamen formidat de opposito; sic agendo contra tale dubium non peccatur, dum adhaeret opinioni alicujus doctoris, et habet rationes probabiles, pro ipsa magis, quam pro opposita opinione, etiam si ipsa opinio, quam tenet, non esset vera; et hoc nisi ipsa opinio sumpta esset contra manifestum testimonium Scripturae, vel determinationem Ecclesiae. Talis

In his discussion of the seventh rule Antoninus mentions the phrase ‘forum of conscience’, while emphasizing the importance of interpretation.⁷² Equity is the main principle here, and it is used in both legal and moral contexts. In order to appoint scrupulous teachers we should use discerning interpretation or declaration. Antoninus uses the word *epykeizatio* for *interpretatio* or *declaratio*, and connects this latinized form to ἐπιείκεια (equity), which should temper the rigour of the law, as maintained by the law experts. The virtue of equity involves a consideration not of one’s own bare maxim or moral code, but of all the particular circumstances. Following Aristotle, Antoninus claims that interpretative equity of the laws is better than legal justice. And so, according to this virtue of equity we can generously interpret the precepts of God, the Church, the prelates, and the judges. In a disputatious forum interpretation means concealing or holding on to one’s own opinion. But in the forum of conscience, regarding human and divine precepts, Antoninus says that it belongs to any one according to his own action, if only it is reasonably interpreted.⁷³

enim non operatur in dubio de mortali, sed secundum opinionem probabilem...” And see also *ibid.*, p. 200: “Sunt enim de aliquibus materiis moralibus doctores opinionum contrariarum; et tunc scrupulosi dubitant, quam partem possint cum bona conscientia eligere. Pro cujus enodatione difficultatis notandum, quod cum bona conscientia potest quis tenere unam partem alicujus opinionis, et secundum eam operari, excluso saltem scandalo, quae scilicet pars habeat pro se notabiles Doctores, dummodo talis opinio non sit contra auctoritatem expressam sacrae Scripturae, nec contra determinationem ecclesiae catholicae, et quod etiam ex contrarietate talium opinionum non inducatur ad dubitandum, sed bonam sibi conscientiam et credulitatem formet de eo, quod credit tamquam de probabiliori parte, et praecipue quando quis adhibet diligentiam inquirendo, an liceat, nec invenit aliquid, quod eum sufficienter moveat ad hoc, quod sit illicitum.” For another case where Academic arguments are used in a theological context in the next generation, with further references, see Edelheit, *Ficino, Pico and Savonarola. The Evolution of Humanist Theology 1461/2–1498*, pp. 279–367.

72 For the phrase *forum conscientiae* and some other related phrases in Adrian of Utrecht, a leading moral thinker (and the future pope Adrian VI) in the generation after Antoninus, see e.g. his *Quaestiones quotlibeticae* XII (Louvain 1515), II, a. 2 ad 2.

73 Antoninus, *Summa Theologica*, vol. 1, p. 198: “Septima regula est, pro scrupulorum depositione praeceptorum discerta epykeizatio, idest interpretatio vel declaratio. Aequitas enim, quam philosophus nominat epykejam, praeponderat juris rigori secundum jurisperitos. Est autem aequitas justitia, pensatis omnibus circumstantiis particularibus, dulcore misericordiae temperata. Et ait Sapiens: *Noli esse nimis justus, qui perit in justitia sua*: pertinet autem ad virtutem epykejae considerare non nudum de se praeceptum, sed circumstantias omnes, particulariter ipsum vestientes. Unde philosophus 5. Ethic. dicit, quod epikēja interpretativa legum est melior quam justitia legalis. Et secundum hanc virtutem epykejae possumus praecepta Dei, ecclesiae, praelatorum, seu iudicum benigne

The phrase *bona conscientia* which is mentioned in the second citation in n. 71 above functions as a kind of special addition to the act of choosing the more probable opinion: indeed, as we have already seen, it functions as a certain inner conviction about the right choice and the right opinion. It is also used in case we do not have a clear authority: when we are in doubt whether to do or not to do anything while lacking an expressed authority, once someone has formed for himself *bona conscientia* about the right thing to do, even though he may in fact be wrong and the right thing to do may be different from what he thought, he is excused, since he did what he could, and God does not require anything more.⁷⁴ Antoninus is citing here Ulrich of Strasbourg and presenting a powerful expression of the absolute superiority of the interior experience as the sole true drive for action: the inner conviction is above the righteousness of the specific act. What we have here is one of the starting-points of the modern notion of conscience: an internal drive which has its own internal justification for action in the sphere of morality. This notion includes an enormous trust in human powers and abilities, and it provides the foundation for human freedom, responsibility and autonomy at the heart of a religious civilization.

Let us examine now more carefully the term *scientia*, which is included in *conscientia*, in this context of moral psychology. The phrase *scientia sanctorum*, e.g., means here an ethical model:

And thus “the Lord conducted the just through the right ways, and showed him the kingdom of God, and gave him the knowledge [or science] of the holy men,” according to Wisdom 10. And the sciences of the holy men are: Abel’s preserved innocence; Enoch’s sublimity of speech; Noah’s strong confidence; Abraham’s integrity of vision; Lot’s preserved constancy; Isaac’s courage in enduring; and thus you should run through examples of other holy men in both Testaments, and “beside their tents”, i.e., science, “feed thy kids. Song of Songs 1, 7.”⁷⁵

interpretari. Et in foro quidem contentioso ejus est interpretari, cujus est condere, vel sententiare. Sed in foro conscientiae circa praecepta et humana et divina, dico, quod pertinet ad quemlibet pro facto suo; si tamen rationabiliter interpretetur.”

74 *Ibid.*, p. 201: “Item Ulricus in summa dicit, quod siquis de aliquo agendo dubio magis peritos consulat, de quo nullam habet expressam auctoritatem, utrum ita sit, vel non: dummodo formet sibi bonam conscientiam, etiam si res aliter se habeat, quam id quod sentit, et quod sibi consultum fuerit, excusatur, quia fecit, quod potuit, et Deus plus non requirit.” And see the other examples *ibid.*, pp. 201–203.

75 *Ibid.*, p. 29: “Sic enim justum deduxit Dominus per vias rectas, et ostendit illi regnum Dei, et dedit illi scientiam sanctorum (Wisdom 10, 10), Sap. 10. Sunt autem scientiae sanctorum,

Antoninus introduces here a series of biblical examples which are regarded as “knowledge of holy men”. All these cases represent models of right acts or behaviour, and they, together with other such cases in the Bible, form a unique body of knowledge which constitutes the *scientiae sanctorum*, a pedagogical, moral, and theological instrument. These *scientiae sanctorum* have also an important role in directing and controlling passions:

Therefore these kids should be fed “beside the tents of the shepherds” *ibid.*, i.e., the disturbances of the passions should be guided according to science and doctrine of holy prelates, who are true shepherds, and through these means, by steping out of presumption, and by progressing in humiliation, when proceeding “In the footsteps of the flocks” *ibid.*, directing and correcting one’s affections by imitation of holy men, the soul recognizes its own beauty and nobility, and when it has become acquainted with this, it regards all earthly matters as of little importance, and stretches forth towards its own perfection, until it will rest in God with glory. All these issues are taken from the same *Book of the Journey* by Giovanni Dominici, yet abbreviated and somewhat changed at times.⁷⁶

The act of imitating the behaviour of holy men is essential for the soul: through it it reaches a self-reflective knowledge and begins its journey towards its own perfection, and then towards God.

In the fourth reason for the creation of the rational soul Antoninus, following Augustine, Alexander of Hales, and Raynerius of Pisa, emphasizes the acts peculiar to every faculty of the soul:

Abel innocentia conservata, Enoch orationis sublimitas, Noe confidentia roborata, Abrahae visionis integritas, Loth constantia praeservata, Isac tolerationis animositas; et sic discurre per aliorum exempla sanctorum utriusque testamenti, et juxta horum tabernacula, idest scientiam, pasce hoedos tuos (Canticles 1, 7)."

76 *Ibid.*, p. 30: "Isti igitur hoedi pascendi sunt *juxta tabernacula pastorum* (Canticles 1, 7), idest motus passionum dirigendi sunt secundum scientia et doctrina sanctorum praelatorum, qui sunt veri pastores, et per ista media egrediendo a praesumptione, et progrediendo in humiliatione, quum itur *per vestigia gregum* (Canticles 1, 7) dirigendo et corrigendo affectus suos in sanctorum imitationem, anima cognoscit pulchritudinem et nobilitatem suam, et hoc quum novit, omnia parvipendit terrena, et ad perfectionem sui tendit, quousque in Deo in gloria requiescat. Haec omnia sunt extracta ex ipso itinerarii libro Joannis Dominici, abbreviata tamen et aliquantulum aliquando immutata." A detailed comparison between Dominici and Antoninus on this and other matters is needed, but this is beyond the present discussion.

And Augustine says that the rational soul was created so that it would see, love, praise, and serve God, in the sense that seeing belongs to the act of reason; loving to the act of the will; praising to the act of speaking; serving to the act of exterior operation, so that through all these there will be a declaration of the first truth, the highest good, immense greatness, eternal happiness. These matters are discussed by Alexander in the second part, and after him by Raynerius.⁷⁷

We have here four faculties of the soul, or internal acts, which are responsible for four external actions: the act of reason produces the act of seeing; the act of the will produces the act of loving; the act of speaking produces the act of praising; the act of exterior operation produces the act of serving.

Let us examine now the proem to the fourth part of the *Summa*, which can be regarded as Antoninus' presentation of his own moral theology. He opens his *proemium* with two citations from the Bible (Psalms 83, 8, and Micha 2, 10). The first citation contains the blessing of the legislator: let them progress from virtue to virtue and God will appear in Sion. The emphasis here is on the movement, which is regarded as positive since it represents moral improvement. In the second citation the attitude towards movement changes: it is now negative, representing uselessness and restlessness: rise up and go since you do not have rest here. Here rest replaces movement as the aim or end, and the crucial word is "here" (*hic*). Between these two citations Antoninus inserts his own remark, in keeping with the biblical tone: the whole life of man on earth is some kind of a way, a temporary journey.⁷⁸ This idea is expressed in scholastic terminology by the technical phrase *in via*, i.e., at the present life, usually contrasted with the future life in heaven which is called *in patria*. But this is not the case here. In these first lines our theologian, focusing on the *conditio humana Christiana*, sets forth some of the most essential features of his moral teaching: the importance of moving, improving, and acting under the guidance of the virtues, without which human life is worthless on both the moral and the theological level. It is human life, and the constant need for divine grace in order to

77 *Ibid.*, pp. 40–41: "Et Augustinus dicit, quod anima rationalis creata est, ut Deum videret, amaret, laudaret, et ei serviret; ita quod videre pertinet ad actum rationis, amare ad actum voluntatis, laudare ad actum sermonis, servire ad actum operis exterioris, ut istis omnibus fiat protestatio primae veritatis, summae bonitatis, immensae majestatis, aeternae felicitatis. Haec Alexand. 2. parte, et post eum Raynerius."

78 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 1: "*Benedictionem dabit legislator; ibunt de virtute in virtutem; videbitur Deus Deorum in Syon, Psal. 83. Tota vita hominis super terram est quoddam iter. Unde dicitur Michaeae 2. Surgite et ite, quia non habetis hic requiem.*"

achieve both moral improvement and salvation, which stand at the centre of the discussion, not the contrast between present and future life.

In his interpretation of the blessing Antoninus clarifies three points by using again terms which represent movement: beginning, middle, and end. In the beginning we are moved by the blessing; in the middle we proceed by means of going from virtue to virtue; towards the end we are led to the vision of God.⁷⁹ In the detailed explanation Antoninus relates movement to moral action:

The beginning from which we should be moved towards acting in a good way is the grace of light. Since without God's mercy or prevenient grace, as we would wish, [and without] subsequent grace, i.e., that we would act according to the desired good, we are capable of performing no good acts, that is meritorious acts, says Augustine. And here the prophet called grace by the name of blessing.⁸⁰

Having emphasized the importance of the practical aspect (acting in a good manner), Antoninus clarifies the relation between human actions and divine blessing or grace: there is no connection at all. The grace of God is given to man not because of his actions or as a reward for his good behaviour, but rather out of absolute divine generosity, without which it is not a divine grace.⁸¹ Thus,

79 *Ibid.*: "Principium, unde moveamur, ibi: *Benedictionem dabit*. Medium, per quod proficiscamur, ibi: *Ibunt de virtute*. Terminum, ad quem producatur, ibi: *Videbitur Deus*."

80 *Ibid.*, p. 2: "Principium, unde oportet nos moveri in bene operando, est lucis gratia. Sine miserecordia enim Dei, seu gratia praeveniente, ut velimus, et subsequente, ut volitum bonum operemur, nulla bona opera facere valemus, ait Augustinus, scilicet meritoria. Et hic gratiam propheta vocat *benedictionem*." The biblical reference might be to Psalm 128, 8, or to Isaiah 65, 8, although grace of course is not mentioned there. The distinction between *opera bona et meritoria ex gratia*, and *bona opera ad quae sufficit bonum naturae*, is discussed e.g., in Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 2a2ae, q. 10, a. 4: "Unde cum infidelitas sit quoddam peccatum mortale infideles quidem gratia carent, remanet tamen in eis aliquod bonum naturale. Unde manifestum est quod infideles non possunt operari bona opera quae sunt ex gratia, scilicet opera meritoria; tamen bona opera ad quae sufficit bonum naturae aequaliter operari possunt." I could not find the reference to Augustine. In the *Hypomnesticon contra Pelagianos et Coelestianos* which is ascribed to one of Augustine's followers, Marius Mercator, we find, in 3, 3 (PL 45, p. 1623), a discussion of *bona opera*, *gratia*, and *liberum arbitrium*, which is mentioned by Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa theologiae*, 1a2ae, q. 109, a. 5. Thomas ascribes it to Augustine and adds the phrase *opera meritoria*, and this might be Antoninus' source.

81 *Ibid.*: "Hanc autem *benedictionem dabit*, non retribuet, seu reddet, quia non ex operibus nostris, sed gratis sua liberalitate largitur, alioquin jam non est gratia; *dabit* autem legislator, qui est Christus."

in order to act in a good manner we need the divine grace or blessing, which is given to us only thanks to God's generosity and has nothing to do with our deeds. And only because of this *lucis gratia* can we be moved *in bene operando* and do good moral actions. One notices that Antoninus might seem to be holding a more extreme position than Thomas on this issue: while the Angelic Doctor (in his *Summa theologiae* 2a2ae, q. 10, a. 4; see the citation in n. 80 above) was willing to discuss the possibility of the infidel doing *bona opera* which reflect their natural goodness (Thomas thus distinguishes *opera bona et meritoria* from mere *bona opera*), Antoninus, until now, has not mentioned any alternative: all good actions result only from divine grace given to Christians. This means that only Christians are capable of doing good and meritorious actions, and only if they were accorded divine grace. Later on, in his detailed discussion of the virtues, Antoninus will distinguish between intellectual, moral, and theological virtues, pointing out that, while the first two are discussed by gentile philosophers, the third kind belong solely to faithful believers who were inspired by God.⁸² This of course means that also the gentiles are capable of doing good moral actions as a result of their intellectual and moral virtues.

But how do we proceed along the way? As already mentioned, by means of moving from virtue to virtue—and here Antoninus distinguishes between two kinds of virtues: acquired, and infused or inspired. Acquired virtue includes doing something good, and its action, as a result, makes the possessor of the virtue and his action good. This virtue is caused by frequent human actions; thus frequently doing acts of temperance will finally turn someone into a temperate person.⁸³ At this point Antoninus clarifies the distinction between truly good actions that are meritorious because they originate only from inspired virtues and are sufficient for salvation, and other good actions which originate

82 *Ibid.*, p. 10: "Divisio virtutum alia datur de virtutibus, secundum quod habeat hominem perficere; videlicet quod virtutum aliae sunt *intellectuales*, aliae *morales*; aliae *theologicae*. De primo et secundo genere virtutum tractant philosophi gentiles. Unde et philosophus in 2. Ethicorum dicit duplicem esse virtutem: hanc quidem intellectualem, illam vero moralem vocat. Theologicas autem non posuerunt, nec de eis cognitionem habuerunt. Sed solum fideles per infusionem habent illi, qui habent."

83 *Ibid.*, p. 3: "Et notandum, quod duplex est virtus, scilicet *acquisita et infusa*. *Virtus acquisita est, quae secundum philosophum 2 Ethicorum bonum facit habentem et opus eius bonum reddit*. Et haec causatur ex actibus humanis frequentatis, quia ex frequenti actu temperantiae sit homo temperatus, et sic de aliis." This distinction can be found in many places in Thomas Aquinas; see, e.g., *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* I, dist. 14, q. 2, a. 1; II, dist. 28, q. 1, a. 1; *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae, q. 63, a. 4; 2a2ae, q. 24, a. 10.

from acquired virtues as a result of human actions and are not sufficient for salvation.⁸⁴ And so, what are these inspired virtues?

Infused virtue is defined by the Master of the Sentences in the second [book], following Augustine, as a good quality of the mind, that is, some good habit in the mind, through which [someone] is living in the right way as if God is acting in us without us; by ‘without us’ I mean that we are not chiefly acting but rather are in harmony and cooperating, and this [infused virtue], on the contrary, is not caused by a human act but rather comes from divine infusion.⁸⁵

With regard to the infused virtue the role of man is minimal, or rather, as emphasized in Antoninus’ description, man is in a rather passive state. Here it is not a matter of learning, of having a habit as a result of frequent actions, or of understanding; the active role is solely given to the infused virtue which is acting in us as long as we are harmonious (*consentientes*) and cooperative (*cooperantes*) with it. And as a result of being moved by infused virtue meritorious act is caused and frequently augmented.⁸⁶

84 *Ibid.*: “Sed huiusmodi [virtutes acquisitae ex actibus humanis] non sufficiunt ad salutem, unde non vere bonum constituunt nec opus bonum, scilicet meritorium, etsi in genere bonum.”

85 *Ibid.*: “*Virtus infusa* diffinitur a magistro sententiarum in 2. post Augustinum, quod *est bona qualitas mentis*, idest quidam habitus bonus in mente, *qua recte vivitur, quam Deus in nobis sine nobis operatur: sine nobis* intelligo non principaliter operantibus, sed nobis consentientibus, et cooperantibus. Et ista e contra non caussatur ab actu humano; sed ex infusione divina . . .” For the reference to Peter Lombard see *Sentences* 2, dist. 27, cap. 1: “Virtus est, ut ait Augustinus, bona qualitas mentis, qua recte vivitur et qua nullus male utitur, quam Deus solus in homine operatur.” For the reference to Augustine see *De libero arbitrio* II, 19, 50: “Virtutes igitur quibus recte vivitur magna bona sunt; species autem quorumlibet corporum, sine quibus recte vivi potest, minima bona sunt; potentiae vero animi, sine quibus recte vivi non potest, media bona sunt. Virtutibus nemo male utitur; ceteris autem bonis, id est mediis et minimis, non solum bene sed etiam male quisque uti potest. Et ideo virtute nemo male utitur quia opus virtutis est bonus usus istorum quibus etiam non bene uti possumus.” Compare *Salutati, De fato et fortuna*, pp. 51–52: “Omnes ergo nostre voluntatis actus Deus, qui universalis est causa, non solum ut dixit Apostolus, sed etiam ut philosophica cogit ratio, inhesitanter ‘operatur in nobis’, sic tamen quod non destruat nec ullam iniuriam afferat voluntati. Si negetur equidem Deum in nobis operari quod volumus, iam universalis causa non erit et, si voluntas in agendo libertatis arbitrio spoliatur, voluntas omnino non remanet nec erit, ipsa sublata, quisquam voluntarius effectus; quod quidem est ridiculum cogitare.” And see also p. 77.

86 *Ibid.*: “. . . et ex ea [virtus infusa] caussatur actus meritorius, et multiplicatur frequenter; actus autem auget habitum.”

Let us look more closely at Antoninus' definition of the infused virtue and its sources. In Peter Lombard we do not have a definition of an infused virtue, but only inasmuch as it is a virtue. We do have there the same wording of Antoninus' definition, and the active role is indeed given to God only, Who is acting in man (see n. 85). Augustine only relates the virtues to the right way of living and to the good use made of them. This means that Antoninus' interesting explanation of his definition, where we find the passive but important role of man being harmonious and cooperative in receiving an infused virtue, comes from yet another source. This might be Thomas Aquinas' *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae, q. 55, a. 4 (the response to the sixth argument):

... one should say that infused virtue is caused in us by God without us acting, but still, [it is caused in us] not without us being harmonious [with it]. And so, this is how one should understand what was said, that 'God is acting in us without us' should be understood. In fact, [with regard to] the things which are done in us, God causes [them] in us not without us acting: since He acts in every will and nature.⁸⁷

This is probably Antoninus' source for explaining the phrase *Deus in nobis sine nobis operatur*, which appears in Thomas.⁸⁸ Antoninus' explanation does not involve will or nature at this stage. Man is a minor actor while God takes the lead. But without that minor actor being harmonious and cooperative God cannot act in him. Antoninus' description leaves more room for human autonomy: although not chiefly acting, man still has to be *consentiens* (a term found in Thomas) and *cooperans* (Antoninus' addition, following to some extent Augustine, as we have seen in n. 88). This last adjective grants man a more active role. Thomas' last statement is missing from Antoninus' explanation since it dramatically reduces human freedom: God acts in every will and nature. While adding the term 'cooperative' and seeing man not as chiefly

87 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae, q. 55, a. 4: "...dicendum quod virtus infusa causatur in nobis a Deo sine nobis agentibus, non tamen sine nobis consentientibus. Et sic est intelligendum quod dicitur, quam Deus in nobis sine nobis operatur. Quae vero nos aguntur Deus in nobis causat non sine nobis agentibus: ipse enim operatur in omni voluntate et natura."

88 But can be also found in Augustine, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, 17, 33: "ut ergo velimus, sine nobis operatur; cum autem volumus, et sic volumus ut faciamus, nobis cum cooperatur: tamen sine illo vel operante ut velimus, vel cooperante cum volumus, ad bona pietatis opera nihil valemus."

acting but still as an important partner, Antoninus slightly modifies Thomas on this point.

In Antoninus' later discussion of the inequality in receiving virtues we find another example for the importance of the human role in receiving infused divine grace (the known argument for the natural desire for God):

Grace has been given to each one according to the measure of Christ's gift, and, on a secondary level, according to man's effort in preparing himself towards grace; yet that effort proceeds also from God's gift.⁸⁹

There is, after all, some reward to man's efforts in his present life. Although the effort (*conatus*) towards grace proceeds from God, still through this effort and by his own actions man can get closer to grace. Human actions receive here a theological significance through this divine effort which moves man to prepare himself for grace. This *conatus hominis* should be related to another term, *conscientia*, since in both cases the focus is on the human part of moral theology. As we shall shortly see, conscience is understood by Antoninus to be some kind of internal equilibrium in the human soul, upon which the four cardinal virtues, representing the edifice of our soul, lean. While the reward in the case of *conscientia* is internal tranquility and external good actions performed by means of the cardinal virtues, the reward in the case of *conatus hominis* is a preparation for the divine grace. But what does this preparation mean in practice? In fact, it might be just the same as performing good actions through the cardinal virtues. But let us go back to Antoninus' proem.

The elect (*electi dei*) proceed from acquired to infused virtue since, Antoninus explains, the former dispose them towards the latter.⁹⁰ At this point our theologian clarifies to the readers of his proem what exactly stands behind the term 'virtue'. 'Virtue' contains two elements which are in fact (*realiter*) distinct: 'habit' and 'action'. While 'habit' is a constant situation or state which ends only by the death of the individual, its 'action' is transitory, but its merit remains in the soul. We are good through our actions, if they are

89 Antoninus, *Summa theologica*, vol. 4, p. 23: "Et hoc principaliter ex beneplacito Dei, secundum illud Eph. 4. *Unicuique data est gratia secundum mensuram donationis Christi*, et secundario secundum conatum hominis ad preparandum se ad ipsam, qui etiam conatus ex Dei dono procedit." In vol. 1, p. 43 we have another example of this argument: "Hinc est, quod naturali desiderio omnes quidem summum bonum appetere probantur, nullam nisi eo adepto requiem habituri."

90 *Ibid.*, p. 3: "Ex virtutibus igitur acquisitis *ibunt electi Dei in virtutem infusam*, quia illae disponunt ad illam."

good, not through our habits, and if our actions are bad, we are evil.⁹¹ Once again Antoninus shows his preference for actions and for the practical aspect of moral thinking. Performing good actions makes us good, otherwise we are evil. There is no other option according to Antoninus. Having the right habits means nothing without the practice of good actions. The fact that many times a virtue is named after its action is yet another argument used by Antoninus; giving the example of 'to believe'. The act of the virtue 'faith', which is in fact 'faith' considered according to its action. This is another instance of his emphasis on actions and practice.⁹² Antoninus continues this line of argumentation while going back to Psalm 83, 8 (*ibunt de virtute in virtutem*), interpreting it in the same way:

They shall proceed from virtue to virtue, i.e., they shall engage [themselves] in virtuous actions, moving from the act of one virtue to that of another.⁹³

While introducing the three theological virtues, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the four cardinal virtues, Antoninus uses again the image of movement and emphasizes the action in each virtue: the elect should move from the act of faith (*actus fidei*) to the act of hope (*actus spei*), and then to the act of charity (*actus caritatis*). The movement is from the highest place downwards, and so the theological virtues are followed by the seven gifts and the four cardinal virtues. Our theologian mentions the movement from the act of divine fear (*actus divini timoris*), to the act of piety (*actus pietatis*), the act of knowledge (*actus scientie*), the act of courage (*actus fortitudinis*), the act of counsel (*actus consilii*), the act of intellect (*actus intellectus*), and the act of wisdom (*actus sapientiae*); from the seven gifts the elect proceed to the cardinal virtues: the

91 *Ibid.*: "Secundo sciendum, quod in virtute qualibet consideratur et habitus et actus eius, quae sunt distincta realiter. Nam habitus semper manet, nisi virtus per mortale excludatur. Actus autem eius transit, et meritum in anima remanet. Non autem habitibus, sed actibus meremur, si boni sunt, et demeremur, si mali."

92 *Ibid.*: "Frequenter ipsa virtus, quae proprie importat habitum, denominat actum suum, ut actus eius dicatur virtus, ut verbi gratia, in symbolo Athanasii dicitur: *Est ergo fides recta, ut credamus, et confiteamur, quia Dominus noster Jesus Christus Dei filius, Deus et homo est*. Credere proprie non est fides, sed actus eius interior, et confiteri actus exterior, unde sumitur fides pro actu suo."

93 *Ibid.*: "...*ibunt de virtute in virtutem*, idest exercebunt in actibus virtuosos transeundo de actu unius virtutis ad actum alterius."

act of temperance (*actus temperantie*), the act of courage (*actus fortitudinis*), the act of justice (*actus iusticie*), and the act of prudence (*actus prudentiae*).⁹⁴

It is interesting to notice that the only pagan authority beside Aristotle mentioned in Antoninus' proem is Plotinus via Augustine.⁹⁵ Antoninus ends his proem with a citation from Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 64, 8, praising justice and its beauty, which we see through the eyes of the heart.⁹⁶

What we have here is Antoninus' redefinition of all the fundamental concepts of moral theology in practical terms. Adding the word 'act' to each and every virtue reflects his practical emphasis and the essential role given to actions in his moral theology and moral psychology. Virtues for Antoninus are firstly and mostly good actions on a theological and moral level. The starting-point of his moral teachings is most elementary and practical: one should know how to reject evil and to choose the good.⁹⁷ If this is the case, then the next question should be: can we find an account of some internal drive for action in the agent's soul? This brings us back to the notion of conscience.

Let us examine now the first two occurrences of the term 'conscience' in the same fourth part of the *Summa*. The term 'conscience' appears for the first time in this part in the first title, chapter one, section VI, which is still part of Antoninus' detailed account of the virtues.

By the end of the section, having discussed two other kinds of virtues, moral virtues and principal virtues, Antoninus turns to a third kind: the cardinal

94 *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.

95 *Ibid.*, p. 4: "Visio autem illa tantae pulchritudinis est, tantoque amore dignissima, ut quibuslibet et quantislibet bonis praeditam sine ea animam existimet infelicissimam Plotinus philosophus, ut refert Augustinus 10. de civitate Dei cap. 23." This is not exactly what we have in Augustine's *De civitate Dei* 10, 23, where Plotinus is mentioned as someone who posited the soul between the Father and the Son: "Quae autem dicat [Porphyrius] esse principia tamquam Platonici, novimus. Dicit enim Deum Patrem et Deum Filium, quem Graece appellat paternum intellectum vel paternam mentem; de Spiritu autem sancto aut nihil aut non aperte aliquid dicit; quamvis quem alium dicat horum medium, non intellego. Si enim tertiam, sicut Plotinus, ubi de tribus principalibus substantiis disputat, animae naturam etiam iste vellet intellegi, non utique diceret horum medium, id est Patris et Filii medium. Postponit quippe Plotinus animae naturam paterno intellectui; iste autem cum dicit medium, non postponit, sed interponit."

96 *Ibid.*, p. 6: "Quaedam est ergo pulchritudo iustitiae, quam videmus oculis cordis..."

97 *Ibid.*, p. 32: "Sciat reprobare malum et eligere bonum." Such elementary remarks should remind us of another important feature of Antoninus' *Summa*: the didactic character of this text, aiming firstly at dealing with the ignorance of priests. On this see Antoninus' explicit remark, *ibid.*, vol. 3 (XX, VI), p. 1142, mentioned in Howard, *Beyond the Written Word*, p. 26, n. 31. This phenomenon was hardly new in Dominican circles; see, e.g., Mulchahey, "First the Bow is Bent in Study". *Dominican Education before 1350*, pp. 204–218.

virtues. He mentions first, citing Ambrose, four virtues which are regarded as cardinal: temperance, justice, prudence, and courage.⁹⁸ Our theologian then moves on to discuss the term 'cardinal' itself. He refers to Joannes Balbus' *Catholicon* where the similitude of *cardinalis* and *cardo* (pivot) is suggested.⁹⁹ Another etymology is then introduced, of *cardo* and *cardia*, Greek for 'heart'.¹⁰⁰ These virtues are called cardinal since, claims Antoninus, they cause the human heart to turn towards reason, to be closed with regard to vices, and to be open to good actions.¹⁰¹

The way in which Antoninus introduces the concept of conscience and argues through authoritative texts is remarkable: after two biblical references and a reference to Peter Lombard, 'conscience' appears in a reference to Gregory the Great. The first biblical reference is to Wisdom 8, 7, where we find that there is nothing more useful to the life of human beings than these virtues.¹⁰² Then we move on to Peter Lombard, who sees these four virtues in the four colours of the veil covering the tabernacle.¹⁰³ In Job 1, 19, four corners of a house are mentioned as being struck down by a desert wind; this event is interpreted by Gregory in terms of our soul being demolished by a multitude of impure spirits which turned upside down the conscience from its state of tranquility. The four corners represent the edifice of our soul: prudence, temperance, courage, and justice.¹⁰⁴ Conscience here, according to Antoninus, who closely follows Gregory, is a kind of internal equilibrium upon which the four cardinal virtues, representing the edifice of our soul, lean. When conscience is disturbed, the whole edifice is shaken.

98 *Ibid.*, p. 13: "Dicuntur tertio virtutes cardinales. Unde Ambrosius super lucam [*Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam* V, 62]. Scimus virtutes esse quatuor cardinales: temperantiam, iustitiam, prudentiam, et fortitudinem."

99 *Ibid.*: "Propterea autem dicuntur cardinales ut dicitur in catholicon ad similitudinem cardinis quo motus hostii firmatur." See Joannes Balbus, *Catholicon* (Mainz 1460), under 'cardinalis'. This sentence can be found in Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum Super Sententiis* III, dist. 33, q. 2, a. 1 (in the solution to the second *quaestiuncula*).

100 *Ibid.*: "Et dicitur cardo a cardian, quod est cor; quia sicut cor hominem regit et movet ita ille cuneus ianuam regit et movet." See Balbus, *Catholicon*, under 'cardo'.

101 *Ibid.*: "Dicuntur ergo cardinales he virtutes quia per eas virtutur cor humanum secundum rationem, ut claudatur vitiis, et aperiat bonis operibus."

102 *Ibid.*: "De his dicitur sapientie viii: Sobrietatem idest temperantiam et prudentiam docet et iustitiam et virtutem idest fortitudinem quibus nil in vita utilius est hominibus."

103 *Ibid.*: "Et figuratur per velum ex quattuor coloribus intextum quod erat ante tabernaculum ut ponit magister in iii sententiarum [III, dist. 33, cap. 3]."

104 *Ibid.*: "Figuratur etiam per quattuor angulos domus Job i, que est conscientia secundum Gregorium in moralibus [*Moralia in Iob* II, 49]."

The second appearance of 'conscience' is similar, but not identical, to the first one. It is found in the second title, chapter six, still part of the discussion of the virtues, and it contains an important addition. Antoninus regards the four cardinal virtues as four angular columns and as the faculties which lead our soul to perfection, but only in civil life. They are not sufficient for the spiritual life. Here we find again the same reference to Gregory and his interpretation of Job, this time showing the instability of our home, the soul, when it leans only on the cardinal virtues. Because of this instability conscience is disturbed.¹⁰⁵ In order to reach stability in our mental home divine wisdom has carved out of itself three stronger virtues: faith, hope, and charity, the three theological virtues. Now we have seven columns to sustain the home of conscience (*domus conscientie*), through which we ascend to the fatherland of divine habitation.¹⁰⁶ It is important to notice that the home of conscience is something which exists in our soul before having virtues. The virtues are the columns sustaining this home. Then the home of conscience becomes stable thanks to the combined outcome of having these seven virtues. Conscience is thus related to the cardinal and theological virtues. It is the source of internal stability through which we can transform these virtues into actions.

4 Conclusion

We have seen that conscience is understood by Antoninus in different contexts in the *Summa* as an inner conviction and drive for actions in the field of morality. Such an internal conviction produces an absolute justification for those actions, even when they are the wrong things to do in a given situation according to strict doctrinal law. We have also seen how Antoninus emphasizes

105 *Ibid.*, p. 22: "He sunt quattuor columnne angulares que predictas quattuor vires anime perficiunt solum in vita civili. Unde ad constructionem vite spiritualis non sufficient; quia sicut dicit beatus Gregorius super illo verbo Job primo. Repente ventus vehementer irruit a regione deserti; et concussit quattuor angulos domus. Tentationis impulsus virtutes quatit et quasi quassatis angulis domus ruit; quia pulsatis virtutibus conscientia turbatur."

106 *Ibid.*: "Ad stabiliendum igitur domum mentis in predictis virtutum columnis divina sapientia per se ipsam tres alias his fortiores excidit, scilicet fidem, qua id quod non videtur creditur; spem, qua id quod non capitur speratur; et charitatem, qua id quod summe diligendum est, ex toto corde diligatur. Septem ergo sunt columnne quibus sustentatur domus conscientie proverbio nono. Et sic septem sunt columnne quibus ascendimus ad patriam divine mansionis." The description of wisdom building a home of seven columns is indeed taken from Proverbs 9, but we do not have there the seven cardinal and theological virtues, or the term conscience.

the importance of action in his moral psychology, adding *actus* even to each of the three theological virtues, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the four cardinal virtues. In all this the archbishop assumes the existence of a free autonomous agent who uses his conscience as a complex instrument of cognition and volition. In this respect the house of conscience is where the intellect and the will come together into action as two complementary faculties of the soul. These conclusions reflect some of the theoretical achievements of one of the greatest and most influential moral thinkers in the fifteenth century, as well as the most recent speculative discussion of moral psychology in late scholastic discourse, one which was coming under the increasing influence of some humanist thinkers. Petrarca, Salutati, Dominici, Antoninus, Valla, Caroli, Landino, Ficino and Ersamus for instance, are among a unique group of Renaissance thinkers and intellectuals who need to be studied and contextualized as an essential intermediate stage between medieval speculations and modern concepts.

As we shall see in the next chapter, the concepts of the intellect and the will, and the question as to which of these two faculties of the soul is more powerful and crucial for salvation, attracted much philosophical and theological attention among leading Florentine intellectuals—scholastic and humanist-oriented alike—in the generation after Antoninus.

A Debate Concerning the Intellect and the Will

1 Questions of Historiography and Method

This chapter does not aim to be conclusive; it merely wishes to present one case-study and place it in the wider context of the relations between humanism and scholasticism in late fifteenth-century Florence. As I have already argued, while the story of Renaissance humanism and humanists has been at the centre of many studies, the story of the Florentine Republic's scholastic theologians of the period of Ficino, Pico, Poliziano, Landino, and Scala, for instance (many of whom had close relations with these humanists), has not been studied with sufficient attention.¹ I shall argue here that the relations

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- 1 The importance of the scholastic philosophers in Florence and the need for detailed studies of their texts can be regarded as one of the implied proposals of Hankins' 'Lorenzo de' Medici as a Patron of Philosophy', in his *Humanism and Platonism in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Rome 2003–2004), vol. 2, pp. 273–316. In this chapter, I shall try to present a picture of the fifteenth-century debates between humanists and scholastics which is somewhat different from the one which can be found in Erika Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Harvard 1995), pp. 1–18. The two greatest scholars of Renaissance philosophy, or intellectual history, in the twentieth century, Eugenio Garin and Paul Oskar Kristeller, tried in their many studies to present a synthesis of Renaissance thought and novelty, also in regard to scholastic philosophy. Despite the fact that they both also made extraordinary contributions to the empirical work of editing texts, we still have texts of Ficino and Pico, as well as of other humanists, which have not been edited so far. In the case of the scholastic contemporary philosophers the situation is much worse: texts by Lorenzo Pisano (on whom see Chapter Eight in the present volume) or Antonio degli Agli, for instance, compared with the authoritative figure of St. Antoninus and his *Summa theologica* (on whom see Chapter Four in the present volume), are some of the works which are essential for the understanding of Florentine intellectual history in the late 1450s and the early 1460s, crucial years for the development of the young Ficino. All these texts and many others are still unstudied, and some are extant only in manuscript form. It is my conviction that detailed studies of these texts might change our general perspective of the epoch. On the importance of this context see Kristeller, 'The Scholastic Background of Marsilio Ficino', in *Traditio* II (1944), pp. 257–318, especially p. 263, and see his important remark on pp. 273–274: "This scholastic element is Aristotelian rather than Platonic in character, and it is obviously due to Ficino's early training at the University of Florence. The specific sources of this element are difficult to verify as long as the philosophical and theological environment of fifteenth-century Italy is not more thoroughly investigated. For it is among the Italian scholastics of the fourteenth and the early fifteenth century that we have to look for Ficino's teachers, not among the philosophers connected with the French schools of the twelfth and thirteenth

between the Florentine humanists and their scholastic contemporaries were rather complex, and that mutual influences existed between these two groups of intellectuals. This is why it is not always easy to distinguish between them and, more significantly, why we cannot reach a full understanding of these well-known humanist-oriented philosophers without detailed studies of contemporary scholastic philosophy.

The context of scholastic philosophy and theology in the Florentine Renaissance has been surprisingly neglected by most modern historians. Theology is not exactly a popular or an easy discipline. Besides, who is interested in the Renaissance by reason of its scholastic, doctrinal, and 'medieval' aspects? Accepted images and preconceptions still exercise a considerable influence on many students of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The idea that the Renaissance was a modern and secular phenomenon became ingrained in intellectual history at least since Burckhardt. Thus, modern assumptions and conceptions regarding philosophy on the one hand, and conclusions based on an unreliable historiography of scholasticism on the other, have combined in presenting, in the best case, a problematic picture in regard to the relation between humanist philosophers and scholastic philosophers.²

In order to deal with this issue more adequately, as I shall argue here, we ought to avoid using modern terminology like 'rational metaphysics'.³ Instead, we should locate Ficino and his ideas on specific philosophical and theological issues in their historical context: in the case of the question of the superiority of the intellect or the will, in fourteenth-century doctrinal discussions. Thus, as recent studies have shown, there is no one single Dominican or Franciscan doctrine, but rather a rich and complicated tradition which develops and differs from Thomas or Scotus, at the hands of individual theologians over a period of one hundred and fifty years.⁴ So, for instance, someone like Durandus of

centuries, who have so far attracted most of the interest of competent medievalists". And see also Field, *The Origins of the Platonic Academy of Florence*, pp. 129–174, especially p. 136; and Celenza's introduction to his *Piety and Pythagoras in Renaissance Florence—The Symbolum Nesianum*, pp. 26–27.

- 2 On many of these fallacies, with further references, see Monfasani, 'The Renaissance as the Concluding Phase of the Middle Ages'.
- 3 Tamara Albertini, 'Intellect and Will in Marsilio Ficino Two Correlatives of a Renaissance Concept of the Mind', in Michael J. B. Allen and Valery Rees with Martin Davies (eds.), *Marsilio Ficino: His Theology, His Philosophy, His Legacy* (Leiden 2002), pp. 203–225; 'rational metaphysics' appears on p. 225.
- 4 For a presentation of the complicated philosophical problem of evil, which is related also to the intellect and the will, with further references, see Kent, 'Evil in Later Medieval Philosophy'; see also her *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington D.C. 1995), especially chapters two and three.

St. Pourçain, a Dominican with complicated and influential ideas, alters the picture presented by the old historiography.⁵ Reading Giovanni Pico's *Apologia* gives us some idea of this rich, lively and complicated picture of theological and doctrinal discussions in 1487. Let us keep this important context at the background of our discussion of a specific debate between Ficino and a Dominican theologian, Vincenzo Bandello, on the superiority of the intellect or the will, focusing on the dialectic between them. Thus, the detailed discussion and analysis in section five of this chapter will concentrate on the less frequently studied text of Vincenzo, with constant references to Ficino's letter. But let us first discuss the historical contexts of this philosophical, theological, and doctrinal problem.

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- 5 For Durandus' notion of the free will see Prospero T. Stella, 'Le "Quaestiones de libero arbitrio" di Durando da S. Porciano', in *Salesianum* 24 (1962), pp. 450–524; see, e.g., p. 453: "... quia liberum arbitrium includit intellectum et voluntatem, et per nudas potentias habemus illos actus, qui ut probatum est sunt actus liberi arbitrii;" see also Durandus' interesting image of contingent acts which have no relation to their end, as friction of a beard, on p. 452: "... quaedam, vero, nullam connexionem habent ad finem, ut indifferentia, sicut frictio barbae"; or his illuminating example of the relation between the act of the intellect and the act of the will on p. 455: "Verbi gratia, volo salvare vitam meam, tanquam finem; statim intellectus iudicat ex principiis generalibus et dictat quod procuranda sunt media, per quae vita possit salvari, et voluntas haec acceptat et vult. Quo facto, statim ex ordine potentialium fit motus in viribus inferioribus ad exequendum dictamen rationis et imperium voluntatis, et quaelibet exit in actum, suo ordine, et proponitur intellectui. Nam per virtutem motivam movetur homo ad videndum, vel audiendum, vel sentiendum, quae faciunt ad finem intentum; et ex auditu vel visu proponitur intellectui quod per transitum aquae vita potest salvari. Item, forte proponitur quod transitus aquae potest fieri per pontem, vel per navem, vel cum equo; et adhuc voluntas est libera ad eligendum quae via est melior, an per pontem, vel per navem; et tunc intellectus iudicat inquirendum quae via sit melior, eo ordine quo prius. Quo facto, praesentatur obiectum determinate, et tunc est determinatum iudicium et electio, quod patet"; or his distinction between the necessary and contingent aspects of the act of choosing: "Licet, enim, actus elicited sit necessarius respectu subiecti, potest tamen esse contingens respectu obiecti; sicut volo salvare vitam, quae salvatur per transire aquam, quod potest fieri vel per equum, vel per pontem, vel per navem; quodlibet, enim, istorum sub disiunctione est necessarium, quia aliter quam per unum istorum finis haberi non potest; quodlibet tamen secundum se est contingens." Apparently, Durandus' view of the intellect and the will has hardly been studied in modern scholarly literature, despite his importance and influence, and his critique of Thomas. This is, of course, an issue requiring further study. On Durandus' *fortuna* in late fifteenth-century Florence we can learn from the references to his doctrines by Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, in his *Apologia* written in 1487; see his *Opera omnia*, pp. 142–143, 163–164, 238 et al.; see also in Paolo Edoardo Fornaciari (ed.), *Apologia* (Florence 2010), pp. 74–80, 82, 98, et al. A short account of Durandus' contribution to trinitarian thought can be found in Friedman, *Medieval Trinitarian Thought from Aquinas to Ockham*, pp. 72–73.

2 The Will and the Intellect in Medieval Perspective

For the will we have e.g., βουλή, βούλημα, βούλησις, in the Greek classical context; θελήμα, θελήσις, in the early Christian and patristic context, starting already with the New Testament; and *voluntas* is the Latin word. For the intellect νοῦς, λόγος, *mens*, *ratio*, *intellectus*, are used in these contexts; the Latin terms are used in the later medieval contexts, with some additions and, obviously, modifications. These terms and others which were used in many different ancient texts do not reflect the later medieval problem of the relation or contrast between the intellect and the will in regard to acquiring happiness. Ancient philosophical discussions barely anticipate the ideas of what later became one of the main disputed questions in scholastic philosophy. Under the shadow of Augustine, who first presented the will as an independent power in the human soul, scholastic philosophy presented different aspects of this problem. Thus, Thomas Aquinas' intellectual emphasis (formulated in his well-known definition of the will as *appetitus rationalis*) was one of the reasons for the reaction of Henry of Ghent or John Duns Scotus and his followers, through some vivid intellectual disputes in the first two decades of the fourteenth century. As can only be expected, the Franciscan masters were criticized by their contemporary Dominican masters. Later on, humanists such as Petrarca, Salutati, and Valla, contributed their new sensibilities to the notion of the will, in the last decades of the fourteenth century and in the first half of the fifteenth century. We should bear in mind these contexts when we consider the Florentine dispute of 1474.

For both Plato and Aristotle, as well as for ancient Greek thought in general, the problem of a contrast between the will and the intellect does not exist. The rational part of the human soul, the νοῦς, should, being the best part, rule over the rest of the parts.⁶ The νοῦς, according to Aristotle's *Ethics*, is the divine part in man; it enables him both to live divine life and to be most happy.⁷

6 See, e.g., Plato's *Republic* 580d ff.; in Aristotle's *De anima* 432a22–b6 we have an account of different parts of the soul, where the will (or the rational consideration) is related to the rational part; see 432b5–6: "... ἐν τε τῷ λογιστικῷ γὰρ ἡ βούλησις γίνεται, καὶ ἐν τῷ ἀλόγῳ ἡ ἐπιθυμία καὶ ὁ θυμὸς..." See also the discussion of Richard Sorabji in his 'The Concept of the Will From Plato to Maximus the Confessor', in Thomas Pink and M. W. F. Stone (eds.), *The Will and Human Action From Antiquity to the Present Day* (London 2004), pp. 6–28. The above reference to Aristotle is also discussed by Sorabji on p. 8.

7 Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1177b30–31: "εἰ δὲ θεῖον ὁ νοῦς πρὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ ὁ κατὰ τοῦτον βίος θεῖος πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον"; 1178a6–8: "καὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ δὲ ὁ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν βίος, εἴπερ τοῦτο μάλιστα ἀνθρώπος. οὗτος ἄρα καὶ εὐδαιμονέστατος." This notion represents the ancient Greek and Roman rationalistic and optimistic conception regarding the harmony between man's mind

Suppose we were scholastic philosophers in the thirteenth or in the fourteenth centuries. Where should we look for our new notion of the will in Aristotle? Let us see, for instance, Aristotle's *Ethics* 1138a35–1139b14.⁸ According to Aristotle no one would use deliberation in regard to things which cannot happen otherwise. The theoretical faculty of the soul, through which θεωρούμεν, deals with the general and unchangeable concepts and phenomena: εἰδῆ καὶ γενή, laws of nature, the celestial phenomena, the Unmoved Mover—everything which is necessary and cannot be otherwise—where, that is, there is no choice, only theoretical explanation. Another aspect of the rational—λόγον ἔχον—part of the soul is the practical one, through which we deal with situations where things are not fixed and unchangeable: mostly human situations. Here, we can make our conscious choice, on the basis of a rational assessment, or calculation, of each situation. Thus, βουλευέσθαι, to deliberate, and λογίζεσθαι, to calculate, have the same objects: things which are not determined and can happen otherwise. For the other type of objects, those which μὴ ἐνδέχονται ἄλλως ἔχειν we have another verb: θεωρούμεν. The contrast here is between ἐπιστημονικόν and λογιστικόν which refer to two different kind of objects: determined, like the principles of nature, and undetermined, like human affairs. Βουλευέσθαι is indeed related to φρόνησις, prudence, and to ἀνθρώπινα, human affairs, in 1141b8–9.⁹ We are now in the domain of human actions, where it is possible and reasonable to consider, reconsider, calculate, and to make our choice. From such Aristotelian definition of what

and the laws of nature, as opposed to the biblical, more pessimistic approach, doubting man's capacity of understanding the divine will and commands. Since the Septuagint was not read by Greek and Roman authors until later on, these two approaches have long existed without affecting each other. On the other hand, this does not mean that the ancient Greeks were unaware of irrational impulses. See the detailed discussion in Albrecht Dihle, *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity* (Los Angeles 1982), especially the first two chapters. For one example of a contrast between reason and will in Roman literature, which became a *locus classicus* for later thinkers, see Juvenal, VI, 223: "hoc vollo, sic iubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas."

8 Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1138a35–1139b14: "Τὰς δὴ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀρετὰς διελόμενοι τὰς μὲν εἶναι τοῦ ἡθους ἔφαμεν τὰς δὲ τῆς διανοίας. περὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν ἡθικῶν διεληλύθαμεν, περὶ δὲ τῶν λοιπῶν, περὶ ψυχῆς πρῶτον εἰπόντες, λέγωμεν οὕτως. πρότερον μὲν οὖν· ἐλέχθη δὲ εἶναι μέρη τῆς ψυχῆς, τό τε λόγον ἔχον καὶ τὸ ἄλογον· νῦν δὲ περὶ τοῦ λόγον ἔχοντος τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον διαιρετέον. καὶ ὑποκείσθω δύο τὰ λόγον ἔχοντα, ἐν μὲν ᾧ θεωρούμεν τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν ὄντων ὅσων αἱ ἀρχαὶ μὴ ἐνδέχονται ἄλλως ἔχειν, ἐν δὲ ᾧ τὰ ἐνδεχόμενα· πρὸς γὰρ τὰ τῷ γένει ἕτερα καὶ τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς μορίων ἕτερον τῷ γένει τὸ πρὸς ἐκάτερον πεφυκός, εἴπερ καθ' ὁμοιότητά τινα καὶ οἰκειότητα ἢ γνώσις ὑπάρχει αὐτοῖς. λεγέσθω δὲ τούτων τὸ μὲν ἐπιστημονικόν τὸ δὲ λογιστικόν· τὸ γὰρ βουλευέσθαι καὶ λογίζεσθαι ταῦτόν, οὐδείς δὲ βουλεύεται περὶ τῶν μὴ ἐνδεχομένων ἄλλως ἔχειν." See also in Dihle, *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity*, pp. 55–56.

9 *Ibid.*, 1141b8–9: "Ἡ δὲ φρόνησις περὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα καὶ περὶ ὧν ἔστι βουλευέσθαι."

we would describe today as the right way of using the will, but still without an independent concept of the will itself as an autonomous power of the soul, we can see where Scotus' distinction between freedom and nature derives from: freedom is related to the will; nature is related to the intellect, and thus "La teoria della volontà di Scoto si struttura dunque in una serie ascendente di piani dottrinali: un primo livello distingue i principi naturali dai liberi, opponendo così l'intelletto alla volontà . . ."¹⁰ But this is not the case of both Thomas Aquinas and Siger of Brabant who defined differently the free act of the will; for them, an act of the will is free not only if an agent could have done otherwise, but rather when there are no external constraints on the agent.¹¹ Thus, for Thomas, there is no real contrast between the act of the intellect and the act of the will, but only a dependence of the will on the part of the intellectual appetite (*ita ex parte appetitus intellectivi se habent voluntas et liberum arbitrium*).¹² This was enough, so it seems, to provoke Henry of Ghent's philosophical and theological reaction and his account of freedom and will, which derived from different traditional sources and cannot be regarded simply as the result of the 1277 Condemnation. Thus, the general picture described by Étienne Gilson for instance, of an Augustinian-voluntarist reaction to Aristotelian-intellectualism¹³ is problematic, if we consider the fact that, as we have just seen, Thomas and Siger did not follow Aristotle's distinction between the determined domain of nature and the undermined domain of human affairs in their notion of the free act of the will; whereas Henry, just like earlier authors such as William of Auvergne (who generally followed Aristotle, Avicenna, Averroës, pseudo-Dionysius, and Augustine), returned to this Aristotelian distinction through

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- 10 Alliney, 'La ricezione della teoria scotiana della volontà nell'ambiente teologico parigino (1307–1316)', p. 343. We do sometimes find tensions also in Aristotle, e.g., *Ethics* 1162b34–36, in the discussion of friendship: "τοῦτο δὲ συμβαίνει διὰ τὸ βούλεσθαι μὲν πάντας ἢ τοὺς πλείστους τὰ καλὰ, προαιρεῖσθαι δὲ τὰ ὠφέλιμα . . ." But the contrast here is between βούλεσθαι and προαιρεῖσθαι.
- 11 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 2a–2ae, q. 60, a. 4; Siger of Brabant, *Écrits de logique, de morale et de physique*, eds. Bernard Bazàn and Albert Zimmermann (Louvain 1974), 87, II. 37–39; 88, II. 67–69; 89, II. 108–110; 91, II. 152–156; 91, II. 172–174.
- 12 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1a, q. 83, a. 4. See also the discussion of Carlos Steel in his 'The Effect of the Will on Judgment—Thomas Aquinas On Faith and Prudence', in Pink and Stone (eds.), *The Will and Human Action From Antiquity to the Present Day*, pp. 78–98.
- 13 Étienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York 1955), pp. 387–409. See also Frederick Charles Copelston, *A History of Medieval Philosophy* (New York 1972), pp. 199–212. And see Friedman, *Medieval Trinitarian Thought from Aquinas to Ockham*, pp. 133–170 for another critique of the "Gilsonian paradigm".

their use of the image of the will as the master or ruler of the powers of the soul, contrasted with the natural manner (the manner of a servant), and so contrasting the intellect, which according to Henry, does not have any freedom, with the will, which is the only place of *liberum arbitrium*, and which is not dependent on the intellect, but rather moves the intellect and produces free operations out of itself.¹⁴

Although we do not have in Aristotle a real contrast between the intellect and the will (since the will is also part of the rational element in the human soul), we can see how increasing tensions between these two powers of the human soul, under the influence of Christian thought, might have been affected by such Aristotelian notions.

Just like so many other fundamental issues in Western thought, this problem as well seems to appear first—as a philosophical and theological issue—in Augustine, where late Neoplatonic notions were combined with Christian doctrines and patristic theology.¹⁵ Augustine emphasizes three mental qualities in man: *memoria*, *intellegentia*, and *voluntas*, and distinguishes between them. One needs to understand a thing in order to remember and to want it, but understanding is distinct from memory and both are distinct from will.¹⁶ *Voluntas*, both for the will of God and for the will of man, appears hundreds of times in Augustine's works. In his dialogue *De libero arbitrio* we find a distinction between *mala voluntas* and *bona voluntas*; the beatific life consists, of course, of the second of these. Expressions such as *amator bonae suae voluntatis* might have been among Ficino's sources for his discussion in the letter that we are going to analyze in section four of this chapter.¹⁷ Everyone wants

14 For a more cautious treatment of the terms 'Aristotelian' and 'Augustinian' in thirteenth-century moral psychology see e.g., Kent, *Virtues of the Will*, especially pp. 39–93.

15 See, e.g., the presentation of the problem of the will in ancient and patristic contexts, and the importance of Augustine, in Alliney, 'Fra Scoto e Ockham: Giovanni di Reading e il dibattito sulla libertà a Oxford (1310–1320)', pp. 243–368; see especially pp. 244–253. See also Dihle, *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity*, chapter VI.

16 Augustine, *De trinitate* X, 11, 17–18; 12, 19.

17 Franco De Capitani, *Il "De Libero Arbitrio" di S. Agostino—Studio introduttivo, testo, traduzione e commento* (Milan 1987), p. 274: "Ex quo profecto intellegis istum bonae suae voluntatis amatorem resistere omni modo atque adversari libidinibus et ideo iure temperantem vocari." The lover, and by implication *amor*, is related here to the good will and to temperance, and they form an opposition against *libidines*. As we shall see in section three, this is not yet Ficino's *amor*. *Voluntas* in a negative sense is related to desire (*cupiditas*) on p. 266. The expression *mala voluntas* appear on p. 274. The emphasis on the will in relation to *recte honesteque vivere*, which is also close to Ficino's attitude, appears on pp. 276–278: "Hanc igitur voluntatem si bona itidem voluntate diligamus

to be blessed, but not everyone wants to live well. Thus, happiness consists in the willingness to live properly.¹⁸ In an important passage in the second book Augustine emphasizes that inasmuch as people strive after (*adpetunt*) the beatific life they do not err; but when someone does not follow the way of life which leads to blessedness (*beatitudo*), when he admits that he does not want (*nolle*) anything except attaining happiness, then he would err. When we follow our will and do so in the right way, we are led to the supreme good and thus, the state of being blessed depends on our will; but Augustine also emphasizes the role of wisdom (*sapientia*), without which no one is blessed. In fact, we must first be wise and hold a notion of happiness in our mind, in order to will it.¹⁹ It is well-known that specific ideas from *De libero arbitrio* were used by Augustine in his later struggle against the Pelagians;²⁰ and this fact became relevant again in the thirteenth century, when the *Symbolum Parisinum* was set up against the “new Pelagians”. Thus, the problem of the intellect and the will passed from Augustine through monastic theology to scholastic theology, and reached its high point during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, also as part of the influence of, and the reaction to, the interpretations of Arab philosophers to the Aristotelian corpus, and the clear emphasis on the importance of the intellect in these interpretations. This was the context of the discussions

atque amplectamur rebusque omnibus, quas retinere non quia volumus possumus, anteponamus, consequenter illae virtutes, ut ratio docuit, animum nostrum incolent, quas habere id ipsum est recte honesteque vivere. Ex quo conficitur ut, quisquis recte honesteque vult vivere, si id se velle prae fugacibus bonis velit, adsequatur tantam rem tanta facilitate, ut nihil aliud ei quam ipsum velle sit habere quod voluit.”

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 278–280: “... quod volunt omnes beati esse nec possunt; non enim omnes volunt recte vivere, cui uni voluntati vita beata debetur.”

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 324–326: “Inquantum igitur omnes homines adpetunt vitam beatam, non errant; in quantum autem quisque non eam tenet vitae viam quae ducit ad beatitudinem, cum se fateatur et profiteatur nolle nisi ad beatitudinem pervenire, in tantum errat. Error est enim eum sequitur aliquid quod non ad id ducit quo volumus pervenire. Et quanto magis in via vitae quis errat, tanto minus sapit. Tanto enim magis longe est a veritate, in qua cernitur et tenetur summum bonum. Summo autem bono adsecuto et adepto beatus quisque fit, quod omnes sine controversia volumus. Ut ergo constat nos beatos esse velle, ita nos constat esse velle sapientes, quia nemo sine sapientia beatus est. Nemo enim beatus est nisi summo bono, quod in ea veritate quam sapientiam vocamus cernitur et tenetur. Sicut ergo antequam beati simus mentibus tamen nostris inpressa est notio beatitatis—per hanc enim scimus fidenterque et sine ulla dubitatione dicimus beatos nos esse velle—, ita etiam priusquam sapientes simus, sapientiae notionem in mente habemus inpressam, per quam unus quisque nostrum, si interrogetur velitne esse sapiens, sine ulla caligine dubitationis se velle respondet.”

20 See, e.g., De Capitani’s discussion of this issue, *ibid.*, pp. 210–217.

of Thomas, Bonaventure, Siger of Brebant, Giles of Rome and many others, and the reason for the condemnations of philosophical doctrines related to the role of the intellect during the thirteenth century.²¹ Thus, for instance, the condemnation of the doctrine *si ratio recta, et voluntas recta*, which was presented as the “new Pelagian heresy”,²² was in fact a reaction against thirteenth-century philosophers and their emphasis on *scientia*, which might have seemed in the eyes of some theologians as a threat to the doctrinal status of the will and its role in receiving the essential divine grace. While the original Pelagian heresy included only a threat to the doctrinal status of original sin (which completely corrupted the will of all humanity since then) and of divine grace (which is essential for salvation after the original sin), with no specific relation to the intellect (except from a more optimistic attitude towards human capacity and its “autonomy” in acquiring salvation), the addition of the intellectual respect was already part of the thirteenth-century philosophical and theological context.²³ An echo of this scholastic context in the fifteenth century which is relevant in a sense to our discussion can be found in Plethon’s attack of Aristotle and Averroës, in his famous oration which was delivered in Florence during the council of 1439, on the eternity of the soul and the creation of the world, where Plato and the Neoplatonists seem to represent doctrines which are closer to Christianity than Aristotle and his great Arab commentator. This attack provoked a vivid philosophical and theological dispute among Byzantine intellectuals in Italy.²⁴ Ficino was influenced by Plethon in several aspects, and his view of the will and the intellect in his letter may reflect his

21 See the detailed discussion of the intellect and the will in the context of moral actions in the thirteenth century under the shadow of the condemnation of 1277 in Marialucezia Leone, *La dimensione della vita attiva in Enrico di Gand* (doct. diss. of the University of Lecce 2004–2005), pp. 37–155.

22 David Piché with Claude Lafleur (eds.), *La condamnation parisienne de 1277—Nouvelle édition du texte latin, traduction, introduction et commentaire* (Paris 1999), p. 118: “Quod si ratio recta, et voluntas recta.—Error, quia contra glossam augustini super illud psalmi: ‘Concupivit anima mea desiderare’, etc., et quia secundum hoc, ad rectitudinem voluntatis non esset necessaria gratia, set solum scientia, quod fuit error Pelagii.”

23 Leone, *La dimensione della vita attiva in Enrico di Gand*, pp. 83–90.

24 For Plethon’s text see Georgius Gemistus Plethon, *De differentiis*, in B. Lagarde, ‘Le “De differentiis” de Pléthon d’après l’autographe de la Marcienne’, in *Byzantion* XLIII (1973), pp. 312–343; for an English translation and a discussion of the historical context, see C. M. Woodhouse, *George Gemistos Plethon: The Last of the Hellenes* (Oxford 1986), pp. 191–307; for a more recent account of the dispute between Plethon and Scholarios see George Karamanolis, ‘Plethon and Scholarios on Aristotle’, in Katerina Ierodiakonou (ed.), *Byzantine Philosophy and its Ancient Sources* (Oxford 2002), pp. 253–282.

reaction also to such disputes.²⁵ Relating the superiority of the will, through the importance of love, to Plato and the Platonists, can indeed be regarded as an anti-intellectualistic reaction to some Aristotelian and Averroist doctrines. Another reaction to scholastic discussions was that of the humanists.²⁶ They seem to emphasize the importance of the will as part of their notion of human dignity, in accordance with some fourteenth-century Franciscan masters and other scholastic philosophers, under the great influence of Augustine. Since this reaction has already provoked some scholarly debates, and since it is directly related to the detailed analysis in the next section, this may be a good opportunity to move on to the debate of 1474 and its background.

3 The Debate of 1474

The Dominican theologian Vincenzo Bandello of Castelnovo (1435–1506) was an outstanding figure in public disputations:

He was most excellent in public disputations, in which he frequently participated, always carrying off the palm from his rivals, never losing. Among these disputations, especially three solemn disputations can particularly be mentioned, in which a large assembly of most learned men was present: the first was in 1481, in the presence of Ercole d'Este, the prince of Ferrara, in his palace; the second disputation was thereafter

25 Although it seems that Plethon regarded both λόγος and ἐπιστήμη as essential for anyone who wishes to be happy; see, e.g., his account in C. Alexander (ed.), *Traité des lois* (Paris 1858; repr. 1982), p. 40: "... οὐτ' ἂν τελέως τις εὐδαίμων γένοιτο, οὐδ' ἐφ' ὁσονοῦν, λόγου τε ἐστερημένος καὶ ἐπιστήμης τῆς περὶ τὰ μέγιστα, ὅς κ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἀγνοοῖ, εἴτ' εὖ ἔχει αὐτῷ τὰ πράγματα, εἴτε καὶ μή." And see also Monfasani, 'Marsilio Ficino and the Plato-Aristotle Controversy', in Allen, Rees and Davies (eds.), *Marsilio Ficino: His Theology, His Philosophy, His Legacy*, pp. 179–202.

26 A general evaluation of the humanists' contribution to this issue, especially of Coluccio Salutati, can be found in Trinkaus' *In Our Image and Likeness—Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought*, vol. 1, pp. 51–102, and in his more general observations in *The Scope of Renaissance Humanism* (Ann Arbor 1983), pp. 263–273. A critique of such a contribution, in regard to Valla, can be found in Monfasani's 'The Theology of Lorenzo Valla', in Kraye and Stone (eds.), *Humanism and Early Modern Philosophy* (London 2000), pp. 1–23. Another critique of the humanists' contribution, with an evaluation of Pomponazzi in regard to divine foreknowledge, can be found in Schabel's 'Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom: Auriol, Pomponazzi, and Luther on "Scholastic Subtleties"'.

in the presence of Ludovico Sforza, later the prince of Milan, against the Jews; the third disputation took place in Rome in 1484, during the special general assembly of the Dominican Order in October, when the most Holy Father Innocent VIII was present, and he was so delighted by Vincenzo's erudition that he immediately and with his own hands, in the presence of this most celebrated assembly, placed on his head the crown of a magister.²⁷

Two facts are essential for understanding the present discussion: first, Vincenzo Bandello was a well-known figure among both professional theologians and political leaders in Italy in the last decades of the fifteenth century, and he was much appreciated for his skill in public disputes where a dialectical ability was a requisite; second, it seems that the medieval practice of public theological disputations was still popular, and of great interest (beyond the theatrical element of the show, an echo in the Renaissance of the ancient eristic philosophical disputations, but also a precursor of the modern theatre), both in the palaces of the princes and, more obviously, in the assemblies of the religious orders.²⁸ Theology played an important role in the intellectual life of the time

27 J. Quetif and J. Echard, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum*, 2 vols. (Paris 1721), vol. 2, p. 1: "In disputationibus publicis potissimum eminebat, quas frequentes habuit, palmam de adversariis semper reportans, numquam victus. Inter has tres praecipuae et solemnes praesertim numerantur, quibus copiosus litteratissimorum virorum interfuit coetus: prima anno 1481 coram Hercule Estense Ferrariae duce in ejus palatio habita, altera coram Ludovico Sfortia postea Mediolanensi duce adversus Judaeos, tertia Romae anno 1484 in comitiis generalibus ordinis mense octobri praeter morem habitis astante S. P. Innocentio VIII, qui tantam ex ejus eruditione voluptatem percepit, ut continuo suis ipse manibus coram celeberrimo consessu lauream magisterii ejus capiti imposuerit." On pp. 1–3 we have the basic biographical facts known about Vincenzo Bandello. He joined the Dominican Order at an early age in Bologna, and was lector of arts, magister of students, bachelor, and finally "ad primam gymnasii nostri Bononiensis cathedram ascendit." He was regarded as one of the first theologians of his time and had many students. He was also twice the prior of the convent in Bologna, once of the convent of Milan; twice the general vicar of the Lombard congregation. He became then the general vicar in 1500, and was elected as master general in 1501. He wrote several theological compositions and encyclical letters.

28 Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and his planned theological dispute in Rome, in 1486, is a unique case of which we have a written account (his *Apology* of 1487) of a dispute that never took place because of the opposition by some theologians in the curia, who also persuaded the pope (the same Innocent VIII who, as we have just seen, was so delighted by Vincenzo in another dispute) to reject this private initiative. For a good account of Pico's Roman affair see Giovanni Di Napoli, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola e la*

since, beyond the speculative philosophical questions, it touched on concrete questions of life and death. No wonder, then, that some time, most probably during 1474, two known Florentine figures, Lorenzo de' Medici and Marsilio Ficino, were having a theological dispute on the question as to what is the most appropriate power in the human soul for the acquisition of happiness, the intellect or the will. We know about it since, as often happened after such disputes,²⁹ they both presented their written accounts of it (and by doing so turned it into a more public event; another indication of a general interest in such disputes): Lorenzo in a poem and Marsilio in a letter addressed to Lorenzo.³⁰ As indicated by Kristeller, already Burckhardt had cited these accounts and "considered them as a noble expression of Renaissance thought".³¹ But some

problematica dottrinale del suo tempo (Rome 1965), pp. 81–137; see especially pp. 118–119. The public theological disputations seem like a more popular version of the academic *quaestio disputata* or the *quaestio quodlibetica* of the late medieval universities (or something between the *quaestio* and the sermon); anyhow it should not be considered as a medieval 'old' habit, but rather it is still a very popular practice in the last decades of the *Quattrocento* and beyond.

- 29 We have seen it in Chapter Two, with regard to the theological dispute on evil held in Florence in 1489. Kraye's conclusion regarding the importance of that dispute in her 'Lorenzo and the Philosophers', in *Classical Traditions in Renaissance Philosophy*, IV, p. 166, is most relevant also to the present discussion: "... it gives us a picture of philosophical culture in Florence that is not narrowly Platonic, but rather broadly-based and pluralistic. Moreover, it demonstrates that despite sharp differences of approach and doctrine, philosophers belonging to opposing camps shared enough concerns to make possible a dialogue—or, in this case, a disputation. And finally, it shows that the core of those common concerns, even before Savonarola returned to Florence in the late spring of 1490, was theological."
- 30 Lorenzo de' Medici, *L'Altercazione*, in *Opere*, 2 vols., ed. A. Simioni (Bari 1914), vol. 2, pp. 35–65; Marsilio Ficino, *Quid est felicitas, quod habet gradus, quod est eterna*. [1473?], in *Opera*, vol. 1, pp. 662–665. I shall refer here to the critical edition in Sebastiano Gentile (ed.), *Lettere I—Epistolarum familiarium liber I* (Florence 1990), pp. 201–210; and see also Gentile's introduction, pp. xlix–l. The complicated textual and contextual relations as well as the broader political and intellectual implications of Lorenzo's *L'Altercazione* or *De summo bono*, and Ficino's *Epistola de felicitate* and his *Oratio ad Deum Theologica* are discussed, with further references, in Hankins, 'Lorenzo de' Medici As a Student of Ficino: The *De summo bono*', in *Humanism and Platonism in the Italian Renaissance*, vol. 2, pp. 317–350. Another example of Ficino's support of the will can be found, e.g., in Gentile (ed.), *Lettere II—Epistolarum familiarium liber II* (Florence 2010), p. 79.
- 31 Kristeller, 'A Thomist Critique of Marsilio Ficino's Theory of Will and Intellect'. This article was the first modern discussion, with a partial edition of Vincenzo's text, of this event. I shall refer here to the reprinted version in Kristeller's *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* (Rome 1993), vol. III, pp. 147–171; Burckhardt is mentioned on p. 154. Kristeller

important facts about the nature of this dispute, as well as some very elegant philosophical arguments, were presented in the third written account of this dispute, emblematically not mentioned by Burckhardt and still hardly known and discussed by Renaissance scholars: the account by Vincenzo Bandello.³²

In the dedicatory letter to Lorenzo, Vincenzo presents some essential details regarding the recently held dispute. We do not find these details in the other two accounts—both, as we shall see, already read by Vincenzo. It seems that Vincenzo missed this dispute, but he happened to come, by chance (*casu*), across its written accounts. Since, as we have seen, he had a dialectical mind and a natural talent for ‘winning’ in public theological disputes, he became very interested. It also seems that he knew both Lorenzo and Marsilio and had some friendly relations with both; it also seems that he read other texts of Ficino. The dispute was held not in Lorenzo’s Florentine palace but rather outside the city, in Ficino’s villa in Careggi (or in the zone around the villa, in natural surroundings, as described in Lorenzo’s poem),³³ the same villa which in the early 1460s Ficino had received as a gift from Cosimo, Lorenzo’s grandfather, so that he would have more income and could dedicate himself to the study of Plato and the Platonists.³⁴ But beyond the issue of the place of the

in this article pp. 156–157, revised his view of Ficino’s attitude towards the will and the intellect through the whole of his career, already discussed in his *Il pensiero filosofico di Marsilio Ficino* (Florence 1938; repr. 1988), pp. 274–310, and identified an inconsistency between three phases: the earliest, around 1468, presented in his *Philebus* commentary, in which Ficino regarded the intellect as superior; next, around 1474, Ficino changed his mind and in both his letter to Lorenzo and in his *Platonic Theology* he regarded the will as superior; and the last phase, in his last years, in which Ficino “seems to have wavered again, and to have attempted a compromise, while being still inclined to favor the superiority of the will” (p. 157). Ficino’s letter and Lorenzo’s poem are presented as ‘hedonistic’ in Edgar Wind’s *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (New Haven 1958; revised edition, Oxford 1980), p. 50.

32 Vincenzo Bandello da Castelnuovo, *Opusculum Fratris Vincentii de Castronovo Ordinis Praedicatorum ad magnificum ac generosum virum Laurentium Medicem quod beatitudo hominis in actu intellectus et non voluntatis essentialiter consistit incipit*, in Kristeller, *Le thomisme et la pensée italienne de la renaissance* (Montréal and Paris 1967), pp. 187–278; see also the discussion on pp. 104–125.

33 Lorenzo de’ Medici, *L’Altercazione*, p. 35: “Da più dolce pensier tirato e scorto,/fuggito avea l’aspra civil tempesta/per ridur l’anima in più tranquillo porto.”

34 It seems that it was not sufficient for that purpose, and this certainly was one of the reasons why Ficino entered the priesthood: he was appointed as a priest on December 18, 1473. For Ficino’s relations with the Roman curia see Kristeller, ‘Marsilio Ficino and the Roman Curia’, in *Humanistica Lovaniensia* XXXIVA (1985), pp. 83–98. For more

dispute, which is clear also from the first words in Ficino's letter, Vincenzo clearly assumes that, while Ficino was arguing for the superiority of the will, Lorenzo argued for the superiority of the intellect, and that he was persuaded by Ficino to change his point of view.³⁵ Beyond the expected approbation for Lorenzo, including praise for his active interest in theological issues (*divinarum rerum scientia contemplatioque*), Vincenzo seems to emphasize this point of the conviction.³⁶ I see no reason to doubt this assumption, which seems to be based on information that was common to both Vincenzo and Lorenzo, even though we do not have any evidence which confirms a change of view in Lorenzo's poem, which is, in regard to the philosophical and theological questions, a poetical version of Ficino's arguments. A reasonable speculation would be that Lorenzo used some early written version of Ficino's letter. We do have, however, evidence at the beginning of Ficino's letter, or rather in its later version, to which Ficino added a sentence:

information on Ficino's *villino* at Careggi see Sebastiano Gentile, Sandra Niccolli and Paolo Viti (eds.), *Marsilio Ficino e il ritorno di Platone: mostra di manoscritti stampate e documenti, 17 maggio–16 giugno 1984* (Florence 1984), pp. 175–176; Kristeller, *Marsilio Ficino and his Works After Five Hundred Years* (Florence 1987), pp. 158–159.

- 35 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 195: "Superioribus diebus nihil tale cogitanti quaerente mihi casu oblata est epistola sive magis tractatus quidam ornatissimi viri Marsilii Ficini in quo sicut sui semper moris est dilucide eleganter determinat inter te et ipsum in agro Charegio de ultima rationalis creaturae foelicitate habitam disputationem, cum ut reor is in voluntatis, tu contra intellectus actu beatitudinem hominis sitam esse confirmares, tandemque in eandem sententiam convenistis." Notice that Vincenzo is using here *foelicitas* and *beatitudo* interchangeably. The first term was usually more related to the classical Aristotelian notion of *eudaimonia* (earthly happiness in regard to human life and ethics), while the second presents the Christian notion of eternal happiness in the hereafter. On this issue see Anthony J. Celano, 'Act of the Intellect or Act of the Will: The Critical Reception of Aristotle's Ideal of Human Perfection in the 13th and Early 14th Centuries', in *Archives D'Histoire et Littéraire du Moyen Age* LVII (1990), pp. 93–119; see especially pp. 94–99; and see also the important distinction between *finis cuius* (which is related to *beatitudo* and God) as the object for theological research, and *finis quo* (which is related to *felicitas* and the act of the human intellect) as the object for philosophical research, on p. 100. Later in his discussion Vincenzo refers only to *beatitudo*, so what we have here may be only a rhetorical turn of phrase.
- 36 *Ibid.*: "Ex qua rationum diversitate admirabilis mihi reddita est tum tua religio probitasque qui inter domesticas et publicas curas divinarum rerum scientiam contemplationemque non negligas, tum illius singularis viri peritia, utpote qui efficacibus argumentis et sustinere et quam pluribus persuadere potuerit opinionem suam."

...[in the dispute] where you subtly discovered some new reasons that happiness consists in the act of the will rather than in the act of the intellect.³⁷

Vincenzo was bothered by the fact that Lorenzo was persuaded, and he decided to discuss it even though he was very busy,³⁸ since Ficino's conclusion (*determinatio*: already here we see how Vincenzo turns the discussion into a scholastic disputation, using the technical term for the last part of the *quaestio disputata*)³⁹ is not only opposed to Thomas Aquinas' opinion, but also to most of the other Doctors of the Church.⁴⁰ This is an important point, since Vincenzo's commitment to Thomas is explicit in his discussion, but here he implies that Ficino's conclusion is problematic also in respect to other scholastic traditions. What does he mean? The Scotists, despite all the differences between them, were not very far from Ficino's conclusion. I think that Vincenzo is referring here also to the way in which Ficino discussed this issue, to his assumptions and arguments which he is about to criticize; but we shall soon return to this point. His friendship with Marsilio is important to Vincenzo, and his intention is not to attack or discredit him, but rather to

37 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 201: "[Cum ego ac tu nuper in agro Charegio multa de felicitate ultro citroque disputavissemus, tandem in sententiam eandem duce ratione convenimus,] ubi tu novas quasdam rationes, quod felicitas in voluntatis potius quam intellectus actu consistat, subtiliter invenisti." Notice that Ficino also uses in the rhetorical presentation addressed to Lorenzo, the word *felicitas*, but in his discussion he uses *beatitudo*.

38 And thus, we do not have to assume any misunderstanding by Vincenzo, or a reaction to this misunderstanding, in Ficino's later version of the letter—speculations which are presented in Kristeller's 'A Thomist Critique', pp. 150–151. Nor do we need to employ an apologetic tone in dealing with Vincenzo's arguments; see pp. 152–153: "His [Vincenzo] presentation of Ficino's opposite views is fair and dispassionate, although he does not always seem to grasp his intentions." As we have seen, and as I shall show in this chapter, Vincenzo possessed a dialectical mind and had no problem in understanding philosophical and theological arguments.

39 This point was justly emphasized in Kristeller's 'A Thomist Critique', p. 152. On the scholastic *Quaestio* see n. 14 in Chapter Two.

40 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 195: "Verum quoniam ea Marsilii nostri determinatio non tantum coelesti theologo Aquinati Thomae, sed et potioris partis coeterorum illustrium doctorum sane sententiae adversatur, inter multiplices occupationes meas lucubratiunculam aliquam tuae magnificentiae censui dedicandam."

present his own view on this issue.⁴¹ His apology for his scholastic style⁴² is immediately turned into a distinction between persuasion through love or hate (an allusion to Lorenzo's poem: what is acceptable in poetry might not be enough for theological disputation), and persuasion through certainty of truth.⁴³ The implication is that Lorenzo should not have been persuaded on the basis of love and hate, mere rhetoric addressed to the emotions, but rather on the basis of arguments which lead us with more certainty to the truth. This is already the first step in the critique of Ficino's letter. But before we begin our discussion of Vincenzo's critique, let us first present some of Ficino's arguments in his letter, adding one methodological remark.

4 Ficino's Arguments

Ficino presents, in the beginning of his letter, historical and mythological examples, and he mentions ancient philosophers and philosophical schools.⁴⁴ He does not think that human happiness can be found in worldly material things, in moral or speculative virtues, or in any part of our soul (sensual or

41 *Ibid.*, pp. 195–196: “Ac iam notissima apud omnes amicissimi mihi Marsilii benignitate fretus, praesertim cum (ut dici solet) opinionum diversitas non frangat amicitiam, quid hac de re tenendum esse arbitrari in hoc opusculo breviter exposui. Nec tamen est intentionis nostrae, si de extrema perfectione rationalis naturae quid nos quoque sentiamus sequenti tractatulo notissimum fiet, Marsilii talis ac tanti viri doctrinae vel minima ex parte detrahare. Neque vero derogari ei quicquam potest. Potulit is quid sibi de hac quaestione videatur.”

42 *Ibid.*, p. 196: “Reliquum est, Magnifice Laurenti, ut si in verborum compositione ornatuque sententiarum nos deficere tua eloquentia iudicarit, non propterea munusculum hoc minus gratum habeas. Siquidem theologorum consuetudinem imitamur, qui longo suo exemplo docuerunt oratione simplici huiusmodi gravissimas quaestiones clarius ab omnibus intelligi posse.”

43 *Ibid.*: “Tuae sinceritatis atque innocentiae etiam erit iuxta iudicium Aristotelis utrumque nostrum, ut facis, amare, persuasionem autem certioris accipere. Nam quia in eligendis seu repudiandis opinionibus non debet homo duci amore vel odio ipsam opinionem inducentis, sed magis veritatis certitudine, in libro *Metaphysicae* princeps philosophorum oportere ait *utrosque amare*, et eos scilicet quorum opinionem sequimur, et eos quorum opinionem repudiamus, quia utrique inquirendae veritati operam dedere nobisque suo studio ambo profuere. Sed tamen oportet si sapientiam quaerimus, nobis persuaderi a certioribus, id est eorum opinionem sequi, qui certius ad veritatem pervenerunt.”

44 Ficino, *Lettere I*, pp. 201–203. This short summary of Ficino's arguments should suffice at this point, since this letter is known to scholars, and since we shall discuss it in more detail through the critique of Vincenzo.

rational). He proceeds to distinguish between different kinds of contemplation, and accordingly, between different philosophers:

Surely in these same things, so to speak, there is the contemplation of sub-celestial things, the contemplation of celestial things, and the contemplation of super-celestial things. Democritus placed the aim of life in the first speculation. Anaxagoras refused to stop there, since celestial things are more outstanding than sub-celestial; but he said that he was content with the contemplation of the celestial things, since, he said, he was born for the contemplation of celestial things, and he asserted that the heavens are his fatherland. Aristotle, indeed, disapproved of this, since the consideration of super-celestial things is certainly more noble, and happiness would be the supreme act of the supreme power in regard to the supreme object.⁴⁵

But while Aristotle maintained that the human soul, while in the body, can achieve happiness, Plato disagreed, since the consideration of divine things in this life always involves ambiguity, caused by the admixture of the intellect and the will;⁴⁶ And so:

... because of this we find in Plato that true happiness belongs to the soul which has been separated from the body contemplating divine matters.⁴⁷

45 *Ibid.*, p. 203: "Certe in his ipsis, sed alia est contemplatio, ut ita loquar, subcelestialium, alia celestium, alia supercelestialium. Democritus in prima speculatione finem statuit. Anaxagoras in ea quiescere noluit, quia celestia prestantiora sunt quam subcelestialia, sed contentus esse volebat speculatione celestium; unde, inquit, ad illorum contemplationem genitum se fuisse, celumque esse suam patriam affirmavit. Quod quidem Aristoteles reprobavit, quia supercelestialium consideratio dignior admodum videatur atque beatitudo sit summus actus summe potentie circa obiectum summum."

46 *Ibid.*, pp. 203–204.

47 *Ibid.*, p. 204: "...quamobrem apud Platonem beatitudo vera ad animam pertinet a corpore separatam divina considerantem." The importance of the separation of the soul from the body and the significant role of the will and election in this process of separation was emphasized, e.g., by Johannes Argyropoulos in his 1456 *Praefatio in libris Ethicorum quinque primis*. See Karl Müllner (ed.), *Reden und Briefen italienischer Humanisten* (Vienna 1899; reedited with bibliography and indices by Barbara Gerl, Munich 1970), pp. 8–9: "non enim tum subicitur corpori, non eiusdem flectitur atque inclinatur momentis, non his, quae magis ad corpus quam ad se ipsam pertinent, servit atque obtemperat, sed ab huiusmodi servitudine atque vinculis liberata his solum viribus operatur, quae non utuntur ut instrumento seu organo corpore, quibus ipsa non eisdem coniungitur, quae non sunt communes viventibus. quas ob res sic ipsa perinde tunc operari videtur,

Next, Ficino discusses the question whether human happiness depends on the angels (Avicenna and Algazel) or on God (the Platonists)—the two objects of divine consideration. But here Ficino already assumes that the object of the human intellect are causes, and that of the will is the good.⁴⁸ Both the intellect and the will reach their peace in God. Human happiness depends only on God. The soul can see God through the intellect, and can rejoice with the cognition of God through the will. Ficino stresses the constraints of human capacity for acquiring divine knowledge in this life; he stresses the separation between the human and the divine.⁴⁹ Love becomes superior to knowledge under these circumstances.⁵⁰ Ficino presents several arguments to show the superiority of love over the intellect in man-God relations, and thus, delight/joy (*gaudium*) is more important than cognition (*cognitio*).⁵¹ The unifying quality of love is emphasized, and it is contrasted to cognition.⁵² The will is the adequate instrument for acquiring something which is external (happiness),

atque si esset penitus a suo consorte corpore separata. cum igitur huiusmodi separatio philosophia sola videatur fieri posse—ipsa enim animae nobiliores illas perficit vires, quarum operationibus ipsa eo modo, quem diximus, a corpore separatur—separatio autem a corpore mors sit morsque etiam dici soleat, philosophia mortis excogitatio merito a Platone appellabatur. ipsa enim ut finem illud sane videtur efficere, separare modo praedicto a corpore animam. quod quidem non vi, non natura, non denique necessitate ulla, sed voluntate solum electione fieri solet.” As we shall see, this contrast between any kind of necessity on the one hand, and will and election on the other, is not found in Ficino. We can find a similar account of the separation of the soul from the body in Donato Acciaiuoli’s *Expositio libri ethicorum Aristotelis* (Florence 1478), p. 2v, but without mentioning the will or election. Election is explained on p. 5v followed by a reference to Albert: “Electio est principium quo homo duobus sibi propositis eligit alterum potius altero. Albertus autem dicit...” On p. 24r we have an interesting explanation regarding the connection between virtue, election and the will in Aristotle, while referring to the structure of the *Ethics*: “Sed quia in diffinitione virtutis ceciderat electio, et electio oritur a voluntate; ideo in tertio ante quam accedat ad declarationem singularium virtutum, statim post eam enarrationem virtutum, declarat in principio tertii quid sit voluntarium et in voluntarium et electio, et nonnulla alia que oriebantur ex his; deinde sequitur in declarandis singulis virtutibus moralibus.”

48 *Ibid.*

49 *Ibid.*, pp. 204–205.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 205: “...quemadmodum deterius est odisse Deum quam ignorare, sic melius amare quam nosse.”

51 *Ibid.*, pp. 205–206.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 206: “...et sicut non qui videt bonum, sed qui vult fit bonus, sic animus non ex eo quod Deum considerat, sed ex eo quod amat fit divinus, quemadmodum materia non quia lucem ab igne capiat, sed quia calorem, ignis evadit.”

since the cognition of the intellect remains within (*manet intus*).⁵³ Will (*voluntas*), love (*amor*), and delight (*gaudium*), are more important than cognition (*cognitio*), sight (*visio*), and intellect (*intellectus*), for acquiring a sense of divinity, the *summum bonum*, in us.⁵⁴

We can thus conclude that Ficino is quite original, and is certainly using his newly discovered Plato, in his description of the problem:

Besides, there are two acts of the soul in regard to God: the soul indeed sees God through the intellect, and after it has become acquainted with God, the soul delights through the will. Plato calls the sight 'ambrosia' and the delight 'nectar'; in fact, the intellect and the will he calls the two 'wings' through which we would fly back to God as to our father and fatherland. For that reason, Plato says, the pure souls, when they have flown back to heaven, will feed on ambrosia and nectar at the divine table. Delight in that heavenly happiness is more excellent than sight, since, as much as we are appreciated by God in this life more through loving Him than through inquiring, so much more in the next life the reward should be allotted more to love than to inquiry. For we deserve more through loving than through the investigating of many causes.⁵⁵

About the same time that Ficino wrote this letter, he was also working on his *De Christiana religione*, and he used this same image of the two wings of the soul at the very beginning of that work.⁵⁶ But what is important here for our

53 *Ibid.*; and see also p. 207: "Quod cum multo plures amare Deum ardentius possint quam clare cognoscere, amatoria via et hominibus tutior est, et ad infinitum bonum, quod se ipsum vult quam plurimis impertire, longe accommodatior: ad voluntatem igitur pertinet consecutio."

54 *Ibid.*, p. 207: "Illic in nos Deum quasi deicimus, hic vere attollimus nos ad Deum . . ."; p. 208: "Fruimur Deo per voluntatem, quoniam per eam amando quidem movemur ad Deum, gaudendo vero dilatamur convertimurque in Deum."

55 *Ibid.*, pp. 204–205: "Ceterum duo sunt anime actus circa Deum: videt enim Deum per intellectum ac Deo cognito gaudet per voluntatem. Visionem Plato vocat 'ambrosiam', gaudium 'nectar', intellectum vero et voluntatem geminas 'alas', quibus in Deum tanquam patrem et patriam revolemus. Iccirco puras, inquit, animas, cum in celum evolaverint in divina mensa ambrosia et nectare vesci. Gaudium in ea felicitate est prestantius visione, quia quanto magis apud Deum in hac vita meremur amando quam inquirendo, tanto maius in illa vita premium amoris quam inquisitioni tribuitur. Meremur autem amando multo magis quam indagando multis de causis."

56 Ficino, *De Christiana religione*, in his *Opera*, vol. 1, pp. 1–2: "Nam cum animus (ut Platoni nostro placet) duabus tantum alis, id est, intellectu, et voluntate possit ad coelestem

discussion are the last words: *indagando multis de causis*. This is an important methodological remark which makes it clear that Ficino treats the intellectual process as mere investigation of many causes, moving from one cause to another, and nothing more. He prefers to discuss the problem by using another instrument: love, which is related to the will. He seems to be aware of the fact that his discussion here is not likely to be conclusive and thus, for a more conclusive philosophical discussion, he refers his reader, just before the above citation, to his *Platonic Theology*.⁵⁷ What we have here in the letter is therefore a rhetorical rather than a conclusive discussion, and this is why he uses the verb *mereri*: he is already presenting his preference, but without any argumentation; *amare* is better than *inquirere* or *indagare*. The language here is imaginative and poetic. Apparently, it was enough to persuade Lorenzo (and maybe also some other readers of the letter) and because of this Vincenzo decided to react.

As already mentioned, Vincenzo in his treatment of the issue reformulates the whole discussion and turns it into a scholastic *quaestio*. In the first part he presents Ficino's letter through eighteen arguments, supporting the superiority of the will; in the second part he presents eighteen opposed arguments, making a case for the superiority of the intellect; in the third part he presents sixteen conclusions (*decisio et determinatio quaestionis*); and in the fourth and last part he presents another eighteen arguments (*solutio rationum quae obiectae fuerant*), refuting, one by one, the eighteen arguments of the first part.⁵⁸ As we shall see, the dialectic between Vincenzo and Ficino is present in all these parts.

patrem, patriam revolare, ac philosophus intellectu maxime, sacerdos voluntate nitatur, et intellectus voluntatem illuminet, voluntas intellectum accendat, consentaneum est qui primi divina per intelligentiam, vel ex se invenerunt, vel divinitus attigerunt, primos divina per voluntatem rectissime coluisse, rectumque eorum cultum rationemque colendi ad caeteros propagasse." The simile of the soul and its wings is taken from the myth of Plato's *Phaedrus*, which will be discussed by Ficino in his commentary on this dialogue. It is interesting that Ficino interprets this simile in terms of the intellect and the will, thus reconciling *intellectus* and *voluntas* in interpreting a newly-discovered ancient myth and supporting his own reconstruction of ancient religion. See also the discussion of the intellect/will controversy in Michael J. B. Allen's introduction to his *Marsilio Ficino: The Philebus Commentary* (Los Angeles 1975), pp. 35–48.

57 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 204: "Sed hec latius in *Theologia de immortalitate animorum* disseruimus."

58 Bandello, *Opusculum*, pp. 197–203, the first part; pp. 203–217, the second part; pp. 217–243, the third part; pp. 243–278, the fourth part.

5 Bandello's Arguments

Already in the beginning of his presentation of Ficino's arguments, Vincenzo reveals his natural tendency as a scholastic theologian by means of his preference for using, in the description of the right feeling towards God, the term *dilectio*, which is related to the Christian *caritas* (ἀγάπη), and thus to the verb *diligo*, and to *diligentia*,⁵⁹ instead of *amor*; *amare*, which are part of Ficino's own humanist theology, presented in his *Platonic Theology*, which he himself mentioned earlier in this letter. While in presenting the first argument of Ficino,⁶⁰ Vincenzo is still very close to the humanist-oriented philosopher,⁶¹ and uses the same verb, *amare*, he then changes it in his presentation of the next two arguments. While in Ficino we find:

Secondly: just as it is worse to hate God than not to know Him, so it is better to love (*amare*) God than to know Him. Thirdly: we can misuse the cognition of God, certainly in regard to arrogance, but we cannot misuse His love (*amor*).⁶²

We find in Vincenzo:

Besides. That thing is better, of which the opposite is worse, and by consequence such a thing is of more value. But to hate God which is the opposite of loving (*dilectio*), is worse than not to know Him, which is the opposite of knowing Him. Therefore love (*dilectio*) is better and stronger in value than cognition. Third. That act which we cannot misuse is of more value than the act which we can misuse. But we can misuse the cognition of God, certainly in regard to arrogance, but we cannot misuse His love (*dilectio*). And so love (*dilectio*) is of more value than cognition.⁶³

59 Du Cange, *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis* (Graz 1954), vol. II–III, p. 172: "His autem Caritatis et Dilectionis vocabulis designarunt nostri Christianorum ἀγάπης: quae quidem vox idem sonat quod caritas, dilectio."

60 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 205: "... quia nemo in hac vita vere cognoscit Deum, vere autem amat Deum quoquo modo cognitum qui spernit cetera propter Deum."

61 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 197: "... quia vere voluntas amat deum quoquo modo cognitum, quae spernit caetera propter ipsum."

62 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 205: "Secunda: quemadmodum deterius est odisse Deum quam ignorare, sic melius amare quam nosse. Tertia: cognitione Dei possumus male uti, scilicet ad superbiam, amore eius male uti non possumus."

63 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 197: "Amplius. Illud melius est, cuius oppositum est peius, et per consequens tale maioris est meriti. Sed odisse deum quod est dilectionis oppositum

The fact that we do not find here *amor* is, I would argue, a significant lapsus. His intellectual honesty forced him, in the discussion of what he defines as the first argument of Ficino, to use again (following Ficino) *amor/amare*, where the scholastic theologian would use, as we have just seen, *dilectio* (and *caritas*, or the verb *diligere*).⁶⁴ This is how the scholastic theologian was led—through his critique of Ficino—to use a term which was already part of a new humanist theology and of Ficino's own philosophical thinking, deeply influenced by the Neoplatonic tradition in both pagan and Christian contexts.

Let us examine the way in which our two philosophers open their discussions. While Ficino in his letter mentions, as part of his humanist *captatio benevolentiae*,⁶⁵ some mythological and historical figures (Midas, Augustus, Caesar) and focuses mainly on a presentation of ancient philosophical traditions and schools (Aristippus, the Stoics, the Cynics, Democritus, Anaxagoras, Aristotle, Plato, [the medieval Arab philosophers Avicenna and Algazel] the Platonists), through which he dialectically presents the problem, asks questions, presents different answers, and criticizes them, Vincenzo opens his discussion with a citation of the Gospel of John, in the first argument; then, in the next two arguments, he refers only to two authors: Aristotle and Augustine. In the fourth argument we have Boethius and additional citations from Scripture, and in the fifth only Aristotle. Both Marsilio and Vincenzo marshal their troops; but each has his own authors, authorities, preferences, education. The differences between the medieval scholastic tradition represented by Vincenzo and the new humanist fashion represented by Ficino are obvious. What is

deterius est quam ignorasse quod est oppositum cognitionis. Est ergo dilectio melior et potioris meriti quam cognitio. Tertio. Ille actus quo non possumus male uti potioris est meriti eo quo male uti possumus. Sed cognitione dei possumus male uti, scilicet ad superbiam, dilectione autem eius male uti non possumus. Est itaque maioris meriti dilectio quam cognitio."

64 *Ibid.*, p. 198: "Praeterea. Ille actus quo homo se ipsum et quicquid possidet deo tribuit maioris est meriti eo qui nihil deo tribuit. Sed amans deum se et omnia quae possidet deo tribuit. Qui vero deum prospicit, nihil ob hoc tribuit deo. Maioris ergo meriti est amare quam nosse. Item. Ille actus quo brevissimo tempore plurimum proficimus maioris est meriti quam is quo longo post tempore vix tandem pauxillum proficere possumus. Sed amando brevissimo tempore plurimum proficimus, perscrutando vero deum paululum longo vix tandem tempore. Maioris ergo meriti est amare deum quam perscrutari. Postremo. Actus quo meliores efficitur maioris est meriti. Sed amando deum meliores efficitur quam intelligendo. Maioris ergo meriti est amare quam intelligere. His ergo rationibus ait posse concludi praemium quod amori debetur maius esse quam quod humanae inquisitioni accommodatur."

65 Ficino, *Lettere I*, pp. 201–204.

important here is the mutual critical dialogue between these two traditions.⁶⁶ It is important to notice that each of them uses his own terms, style, modes, but still, there is enough common ground between them. They both are part of the same intellectual world of the late fifteenth century, and they reveal to us different aspects of this complex world. The critical dialogue itself, however, is taking place in Vincenzo's text only, since his text is a reaction to Ficino's.

In argument 8 of the second part Vincenzo refers to Ficino's observation, still part of his rhetorical opening:

...wealth is not the supreme good, as Midas regarded it: for it is not because of wealth in itself but rather because of the goods of the body or the soul that it is obtained.⁶⁷

This argument is based on the authority of the mythological example and not on powerful reasoning, which should, according to Vincenzo, be focused on the contrast between two objects (*pecunia* vs. *deus*), and thus:

Just as for these people, to whom wealth is the end, it is said that to possess it is also the end, but not to love or to long for it. But understanding, and not willing, is the operation through which the intellectual nature first comes in contact with God, who is the ultimate external end.⁶⁸

66 Another example for such a mutual influence, in Florence around 1480, is presented in Francesco di Tommaso's dialogue; see: Jonathan Hunt, *Politician and Scholastic Logic: An Unknown Dialogue by a Dominican Friar* (Città di Castello 1995). This is a dialogue between the author, Francesco di Tommaso, a Dominican theologian from Santa Maria Novella, and the famous humanist Angelo Poliziano: Francesco is much more positive in his attitude to rhetoric than most scholastic theologians, since he is speaking in the dialogue with Angelo. The humanist is interested in logic. See Hunt's introduction pp. 18–19.

67 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 201: "... pecunia non est summum bonum, ut opinatus est Mida: non enim propter se ipsam sed propter corporis vel animi commoda comparatur." See a similar view expressed in a scholastic manner in Henry of Ghent, *Summa quaestionum ordinariam*, a. 49, q. 5, P: "... ut quod pecunia non est finis principalis alicuius, sed potius habere et possidere eam aut expendere aut erogare; hoc contingit in rebus quae sunt ad finem, nullo autem modo in re illa quae obiective est finis, ad quem sunt omnia alia et ipse ad nihil aliud a se." And see Cicero, *De officiis I*, 25.

68 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 206: "Sicut iis quibus pecunia est finis, dicitur et possidere ipsam etiam finis, non autem amare neque concupiscere. Sed intelligere est operatio per quam natura intellectualis primo attingit ad deum qui est ultimus finis exterior, non autem velle."

For some people, the possession of money is indeed their end and purpose. To possess, *possidere* (which is related to usury, one of the traditional sins⁶⁹), is among passions like *amare* and *concupiscere* (a verb with obvious negative connotations, which is presented precisely beside *amare*, a verb which is so important to Ficino. This is again a critique by the scholastic theologian who is still not happy with *amor* in this context, and relates it to lower passions and objects, rather than to noble intellectual operations or to God as its object), which relate man to certain objects. But *intelligere* relates our intellectual nature to God, while *velle* is by implication related to these passions and to lower and corporal objects. While Ficino uses historical or mythological examples and prefers to lead his reader to the distinction between body and soul, and then to a discussion of the irrational and rational powers of the soul and the things which are related to them (pp. 202–204), so that he can mention some philosophical schools including his *Platonici* (p. 204), his scholastic critic introduces a sharper argument which is not based on philosophical classical *topoi* or conventions, but rather on a sharp observation: there are people for whom the possession of money is, in itself, a purpose, and not just an instrument to gain *corporis vel animi commoda*. While the humanist, in his *captatio benevolentiae*, used philosophical rhetoric, and thus missed an important point, the scholastic is more attached to the realities of life and to the psychology of human nature.⁷⁰ This observation enabled him to focus on the object of the operation (*possidere* or *intelligere*), and thus, contrast *pecunia* and *deus*, and to conclude:

Therefore, the happiness of the intellectual substance consists in the understanding of God.⁷¹

A very strong case is made by Vincenzo in argument 16 of the second part: it includes another critique of three acts which were emphasized by Ficino (*desiderare*, *amare*, *delectari*), and it is focused on the fact that the will cannot

69 On this see Carl F. Taeusch, "The Concept of "Usury". The History of an Idea', in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 3 (1942), pp. 291–318; especially pp. 291–299.

70 And also to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* 1147b29–31: "... αἰρετὰ δὲ καθ' αὐτά (λέγω δ' οἷον νίκεν τιμὴν πλοῦτον καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ ἡδέων)." But this is not quite what Bandello emphasizes. In this sentence Aristotle lists a few things which, for most people, are objects of choice in themselves. But later on he shows that in the last account they are not the real τέλος.

71 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 206: "Ergo in intellectione dei beatitudo intellectualis substantiae consistit."

judge or make observations regarding true or false things. *Amor* is again related to *desiderium* and *delectatio*. It starts with a concrete example:

Indeed a real man differs from a painted man because of the things which constitute the substance of man. But true happiness does not differ from a false one according to the act of the will, but rather according to the act of the intellect. Since in the same way the will consists of desiring, loving, or delighting in anything which would be placed before itself as the supreme good, whether it be true or false, since someone who falsely constituted for himself an object of happiness is not less loving or desirous of it than someone who truly placed before himself the supreme good. But whether this supreme good which was determined be true or false, this difference can be made by the intellect, which can distinguish between true and false. Since what is truly good is what is in harmony with the intellect, and the false is indeed what is in disharmony with the intellect. And so happiness essentially consists of the act of the intellect rather than of the act of the will.⁷²

The intellect is the instrument suitable for such judgement. While Ficino relates love to union, and emphasizes the need to be united with God, and thus, contrasts it with the cognition of God, so that,

While the power of cognition, as we have mentioned earlier, consists in a certain distinction, the power of love consists of union; and thus, we are more properly united with God through lovable delight, which transforms us to the beloved God, than through cognition. And just as not the one who sees the good, but rather the one who wants it, becomes good, so the soul, not because it considers God, but because it loves God,

72 *Ibid.*, pp. 211–212: “Differt enim verus homo a picto per ea quae substantiam hominis constituunt. Vera autem beatitudo non differt a falsa secundum actum voluntatis sed intellectus. Nam eodem modo se habet voluntas in desiderando amando vel delectando quicquid illud sit quod sibi proponitur ut summum bonum sive vere sive falso. Neque enim qui falso sibi obiectum beatitudinis constituit minus amat vel desiderat quam qui vere summum bonum sibi praefixit. Utrum autem vere sit summum bonum quod ut tale proponitur vel falso, hoc differt ex parte intellectus qui verum a falso discernere potest. Nam vere bonum est quod intellectui consonat, falsum vero quod ab intellectu discordat. Beatitudo itaque in intellectus essentialiter magis quam voluntatis actu consistit.”

becomes divine; just like matter, which becomes fire not because of the light of the fire, but rather because of its heat.⁷³

Vincenzo's object is true or false things. He is not interested, in this context, in achieving a union with God. While for Ficino God signifies a limit of the human intellect, which could somehow be bridged only through *amor*, for Vincenzo God, the *summum bonum*, is a legitimate object for the human intellect, just like any other consideration of true and false things. The theological consideration of the true *summum bonum* is still a process of cognition, which involves the intellect, not the will, from man's point of view. This, however, does not mean that we can have a full knowledge of the divinity through the use of our intellect. Our only criterion is what seems to be consonant or dissonant with our intellect. That is, that we do not really get to know God, but rather that through the intellect we can focus on what is truly good, *vere bonum* (and not *vere verum* or *summum bonum*), which is contrasted to *vere falsum* for theological speculations; if we cannot do this, all our judgments in daily life must be suspended. Notice that *bonum* here stands for *verum* and is opposed to *falsum*. This is important, since Vincenzo is turning the *summum bonum* to *vere bonum*, and contrasts it to *vere falsum*, and thus describes the human theological speculation of true and false things in regard to God, the divinity, etc. Pico will continue on this line of thought in his *Apology*.⁷⁴

73 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 206: "Cum vis cognitionis, ut supra diximus, in quadam discretione consistat, vis autem amoris in unione, propius unimur Deo per amatorium gaudium, quod nos transformat in amatum Deum, quam per cognitionem; et sicut non qui videt bonum, sed qui vult fit bonus, sic animus non ex eo quod Deum considerat, sed ex eo quod amat fit divinus, quemadmodum materia non quia lucem ab igne capiat, sed quia calorem, ignis evadit."

74 Most relevant here are some observations of Celano in his 'Act of the Intellect', p. 99: "Whether they believed one happiness or two are possible to man, the medieval commentators on the EN recognize the supremacy of the intellect as a fundamental element in Aristotle's description of human nature. Since the intellect can only be satisfied by union with the supremely intelligible object, the commentators conclude that happiness is fully achieved through the intellectual union between man and God. This intellectual knowledge of God, though imperfect by comparison to the beatific union, is nevertheless the supreme achievement of natural human abilities. The natural desire to know God leads one to speculate metaphysically upon the nature and cause of all being. Since Aristotle argued that God is the ultimate object of metaphysical speculation, both Albert and Thomas recognize an affinity between the life of the philosopher and that of the believer." See also, Henry of Ghent's critique of these theologians, which is very close to Ficino's argumentation and terms in the letter, in his *Summa quaestionum ordinariam*,

Vincenzo is faithful to the distinction between the divine and the human, but in his discussion he is less drastic than Ficino. It seems that Ficino forgot the image of the two wings (p. 204) and, moved by a rhetorical impulse to present the superiority of the will, he regards the divine domain as totally beyond human intellectual capacity; divinity represents for him only a limit on the human intellect.⁷⁵ This may indeed be a reaction to scholastic theologians who forgot the gap between humanity and divinity in their intensive use of reasoning and syllogisms, and indeed, it sounds like an echo, in late fifteenth-century Florence, of Henry of Ghent's critique; but this is not the case with Vincenzo:

Indeed, nothing can be repellent which is observed with admiration, since as long as it is subject to admiration, it remains as yet a longing; but the divine substance is always observed with admiration by any created intellect which clearly observes it, while such intellect cannot comprehend this divine substance.⁷⁶

Admiration for the divine substance, which is far beyond the human capacity of understanding, is the consequence of this observation. Vincenzo claims in fact that between a complete understanding and its opposite there are many intermediate stages; one is admiration, following the vision of the divine essence, and this vision cannot be replaced by the will.⁷⁷ Such admiration for the divine is at the bottom of the theological quest.

Another level of Vincenzo's critique is of the way in which Ficino uses certain terms: Ficino uses the term enjoyment (*fruitio*) quite freely and mixes, according to Vincenzo, its two aspects: the more general aspect (poetical or rhetorical use) and the more technical aspect:

Therefore, the supreme good is God, but happiness is the enjoyment of God [first aspect of *fruitio*]. We enjoy God through the will, since through it we are indeed moved by love towards God, while by delight we are

a. 49, qq. 5–6, cited and discussed on pp. 103–109. For Pico's discussion in the *Apology*, see Edelheit, *Ficino, Pico and Savonarola*, pp. 279–367.

75 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 205: "... quia nemo in hac vita vere cognoscit Deum ..."

76 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 240: "Nihil enim quod cum admiratione conspicitur potest esse fastidiosum, quia quamdiu sub admiratione est adhuc desiderium manet, divina autem substantia a quolibet intellectu creato clare eam vidente semper cum admiratione conspicitur cum illam comprehendere non possit."

77 *Ibid.*: "Non poterit ergo clare videns divinam essentiam ab illa visione propria voluntate desistere."

extended and directed towards God. But different souls enjoy God's different virtues and ideas: indeed each one is included first and foremost in that virtue which he loved in this life before other things, and he imitated it with all his might. But all people enjoy God in His fullness: indeed God is whole in the single ideas; but they possess the entire God more excellently, who observe Him through the more excellent idea. For indeed, since each person enjoys the entire God most through his own capacity, and through the same way in which he has loved him, for that reason Plato says, 'malice is absent from the divine chorus': indeed since the most pleasant thing of all would be to obtain this beloved thing, anyone who through this possession of what he loved is happy and satisfied with his life, just as if two lovers would be sharing their own pleasures, each would be satisfied in the possession of his beloved [second aspect of *fruitio*], and indeed would have no reason for worry, whether the other would obtain a more beautiful beloved.⁷⁸

Vincenzo argues:

Furthermore, it is known that enjoyment can be understood in two ways. The first, generally and widely, which means this total perfection which the perfect happiness brings together, clearly through vision, intention and supreme delight. And thus enjoyment is the most noble act and the highest operation. But as such, it is not solely the act of the intellect or the will, but rather it belongs to both, because of its different parts. Whence in this way, in the beginning it is the act of the intellect, because of vision and intention, but in the stage of completion it is the act of the will, because of supreme delight. And in this way enjoyment which has been achieved brings in and contains total happiness. The second

78 Ficino, *Lettere I*, pp. 208–209: "Summum igitur bonum Deus est, beatitudo autem fruitio Dei. Fruimur Deo per voluntatem, quoniam per eam amando quidem movemur ad Deum, gaudendo vero dilatamur convertimurque in Deum. Fruuntur autem varii animi variis Dei virtutibus et ideis: quisque enim ea virtute potitur imprimis, quam in hac vita dilexit pre ceteris atque est pro viribus imitatus. Toto autem Deo fruuntur omnes: totus enim in singulis est ideis, sed totum Deum prestantius possident qui eum in prestantiore idea conspiciunt. Quoniam vero quisque et Deo toto pro sua capacitate potior et eo modo quo amaverat fruitur, ideo, ut Plato inquit, 'livor abest a divino choro': cum enim omnium iucundissimum sit re amata potiri, quilibet in eo potiundo quod amaverat contentus plenusque vivit, quippe si amatores duo suarum deliciarum compotes fiant, uterque in amati sui possessione quiescet, neque curam quidem ullam habebit, num alter pulchriore potiatur amato."

way of understanding enjoyment, properly and strictly, as it is distinct and opposed to vision, and thus brings in the supreme delight and satisfaction, derived from the ultimate end and from the fruit which was already perceived by vision and intention. And in this way the achieved enjoyment is an act of the will. As such, it is not the most noble act nor is it the most perfect operation, but only causally and concomitantly, since it certainly derives from, and follows on, the most noble act and the most perfect operation.⁷⁹

When satisfaction (*quietatio*) is involved, it is already the consequence of the act of vision, and thus to enjoy (*frui*), cannot be regarded as the most noble and perfect act or operation. But notice that Ficino uses here the verb to observe (*conspicere*) in a positive context. Ficino is more rhetorical, and quite loose in his use of terms, Vincenzo is more technical. He is interested in accurate terminology (as opposed to Ficino's *indagando multis de causis*), in different aspects of each term, and the like, while Ficino is focused on his main theme (uniting the human soul to God through love, which is the act of the will), citing here and there Plato, and using, wherever possible, Neoplatonic terminology and doctrines. Let us now see what his scholastic critic does in regard to one known doctrine.

It seems that our two philosophers present two different perspectives in regard to the relation between man and God. According to Vincenzo, the divine vision can stand even against sins:

Still he would not desist from seeing through subtraction of the object, since this object which is God always holds itself in the same way and

79 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 236: "Sciendum ulterius quod fruitio potest dupliciter capi. Uno modo communiter et large, ut dicit illam totalem perfectionem quam perfecta beatitudo aggregat, videlicet visionem et summam delectationem. Et sic fruitio est nobilissimus actus et altissima operatio. Sed ut sic non est actus solius intellectus nec solius voluntatis, sed utriusque ratione partium. Unde hoc modo initiative est actus intellectus ratione visionis et tentionis, completive vero sive terminative actus voluntatis ratione summae delectationis. Et hoc modo fruitio sumpta importat et continet totam beatitudinem. Alio modo proprie et stricte capi potest, ut scilicet distinguitur contra visionem, et sic importat summam delectationem et quietationem de ultimo fine et fructu iam per visionem et tentionem percepto. Et hoc modo sumpta fruitio est actus voluntatis. Et ut sic non est actus nobilissimus nec operatio perfectissima nisi causaliter et concomitanter quia scilicet causatur et concomitatur ab actu nobilissimo et ab operatione perfectissima."

does not elude us, but only as much as we elude him through sin, which cannot happen in the one who clearly sees the divine essence.⁸⁰

While Ficino presents *amor* as the instrument through which we can become closer to God,⁸¹ Vincenzo presents another perspective: this vision does not allow us to fall. It keeps us in constant close relation with God. Vincenzo's perspective of the relation God-man is fixed and constant (under the vision of God), while Ficino's is more dynamic: *amor* can unite us with God. But if this union is the high point of the act of *amor*, what about the stages in the middle? It is not clear what it means to be united with God here, and whether it involves an external change (movement towards God) or whether Ficino is referring to an internal change.⁸² It seems that for Ficino *amor* is no less

80 *Ibid.*, p. 241: "Neque etiam videre desinet per subtractionem obiecti quia obiectum illud quod est deus semper eodem modo se habet nec elongatur a nobis nisi in quantum elongamur ab ipso per peccatum, quod in vidente clare divinam essentiam cadere non potest."

81 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 206: "...vis autem amoris in unione, propius unimur Deo per amatorium gaudium, quod nos transformat in amatum Deum..." But the implication is that we can be closer but also far from God. See quite similar expressions in Henry of Ghent's *Summa quaestionum ordinariam*, a. 49, q. 5, H: "Bonum autem cognitum in intellectu allicit voluntatem, quae allecta sua actione quasi movet se in finem, ipsum sibi adipiscendo sub ratione boni et finis ut est causa causarum, et per hoc vi amoris quasi transformatur in finem, et summe eidem conformatur, in quo consistit beatitudinis complementum..." But the thirteenth-century theologian is much more cautious in his description of *vis amoris*, which here is only part of *beatitudinis complementum*. See also *Summa quaestionum ordinariam*, a. 49, q. 6, P: "Amor enim sive actus amoris qui est actus voluntatis, vim quandam conversivam habet amantis in amatum, iuxta illud quod dicit Dionysius iiii capite de divinis nominibus. Omnia ad seipsum bonitas convertit: et optimum est in quod omnia convertuntur sicut in propriam singulorum summitatem, et illud concupiscunt omnia, intellectualia quidem et rationalia scienter, sensibilia vero sensibiliter, sensus autem expertia insito motu vitalis appetitus, tantummodo autem existentia ad solam essentialem participationem, et infra. Est autem ecstaticus divinus amor, non sinens seipsa esse amantes: sed amandorum, hoc est, non sinit qui maneant ipsi qui erant: sed facit ut sint ipsi qui ab eis amantur." Notice that the power of love is part of the power of the will, while in Ficino it becomes an independent power. For the relations between Henry of Ghent and Platonism see Carlos Steel, 'Henricus Gandavensis Platonicus', in Guy Guldentops and Carlos Steel (eds.), *Henry of Ghent and the Transformation of Scholastic Thought. Studies in Memory of Jos Decorte* (Louvain 2003), pp. 15–39.

82 *Ibid.*: "...quod nos transformat in amatum Deum"; "...sic animus... ex eo quod amat fit divinus, quemadmodum materia non quia lucem ab igne capiat, sed quia calorem, ignis evadit."

important than *voluntas*; *amor* as a unifying power is his main subject, and it is related, in the traditional theological discussion of the issue, to the act of the will in the domain of free and undetermined things, in contrast to the domain of natural determined things, which is the domain of the intellect. But it is remarkable that we do not find any mention of freedom (*libertas*) in Ficino's discussion; as we have seen, his discussion is not technical, and often tends to use images and allegories, but here, without *libertas*, it becomes problematic in regard to the traditional scholastic discussions of these questions. I would say that the Neoplatonic notion of *amor* as a unifying power in the cosmos, so central to Ficino, replaced here the notion of freedom. In fact we are faced with a break in the traditional discussions, in which *voluntas* and *necessitas* are related together, while *libertas* is completely excluded. Let us see, for instance, the beginning of chapter II, book IV, of the *Platonic Theology*:

In what way do the celestial souls move their spheres? Indeed, just as it seemed to the Platonists, like the way in which your soul moves your body through the appetite. And the appetite therein is aroused by thinking, and thinking at that moment by a fatal law of its soul. For that reason Plato in his book *The Statesman* says: 'fate and innate desire move the heavens'. It seems that he learnt this from Zoroaster, from whom all the wisdom of the ancient theologians emanated. He indeed, when he discussed the heavens, said: αἰδίῳ βουλῇ φέρεται, αἰεὶ τρέχει ἔργῳ ἀνάγκης, i.e., 'by eternal will it is governed, always follows the works of necessity'. And we shall clearly understand this, if we thus consider the order of things.⁸³

83 Ficino, *Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum*, vol. 1, p. 296: "Quonam pacto caelestes animae sphaeras suas movent? Profecto quemadmodum placet Platoniciis, sicut corpus tuum anima tua per appetitum. Qui appetitus illic quoque a cogitatione excitatur, cogitatio ibidem a fatali illius animae lege. Ideo Plato in libro *De regno* inquit: 'Caelum movet fatum et innata cupiditas'. Quod accepisse videtur a Zoroastre, a quo omnis manavit theologorum veterum sapientia. Ille enim ubi de caelo loquitur, inquit: αἰδίῳ βουλῇ φέρεται, αἰεὶ τρέχει ἔργῳ ἀνάγκης, id est: 'Sempiterna voluntate fertur, semper necessitatis opera currit'. Quod perspicue intellegemus, si ita rerum ordinem considerabimus." Argyropulos, as we have seen in n. 47 above, in a very different manner from Ficino, contrasts the will and election with any kind of necessity. Necessity of causes and effects is, on the one hand, emphasized by Salutati in his *De fato et fortuna*, pp. 17–18: "Qui quidem effectus omnes, licet in se considerati longe plus et dispositionis et possibilitatis habuerint ad oppositum quam ad id quod factum est, a prime tamen cause voluntate, que 'rerum necessitas est', et angelorum obedientia, quam non poterant non exhibere, de necessitate sine dubio processerunt." On the other hand Salutati establishes the connection between the will and freedom; see pp. 19–20: "Sola voluntas, que rationalis creature potentia est, sic

Ficino presents here what we would call a cosmic law: the law under which the movement of the heavens is determined. The *appetitus* is what causes the souls to move their spheres and it is analogous to our bodies and souls. This *appetitus* is ruled by *cogitatio*, and the *cogitatio* by *fatalis illius animae lex*, or, according to the translated citation from Plato, *fatum et innata cupiditas*. The reference to Zoroaster brings the will into the picture, but this eternal will is completely subject to *opera necessitatis*, and there is no place for *libertas* in such a cosmos. In what sense, then, is it a will? We can say that it is not the same notion of the will discussed by the scholastic philosophers and theologians during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The analogy implied at the beginning of the passage leaves no room for a different notion of the will, a personal will of the human soul. This *innata cupiditas* or *amor* is everywhere, and there is no *libertas* at all.

Vincenzo in his response refers to arguments such as the following one, by Alexander of Alexandria: "It is not similar in regard to the will, in its way with regard to the end . . . since the will can turn itself away from the end . . ." ⁸⁴ The possibility not to turn towards the end (*finis*), which is the extreme expression of freedom and contingency presented by Scotus and discussed, in different modified ways, by his followers in the first decades of the fourteenth century is, according to Vincenzo, just as for other Dominican theologians who criticized the Scotist position on this point, a defect.

obtinuit arbitrii libertatem, quod omnino voluntas non sit, si sibi libertas (quod est tamen impossibile) subtrahatur, libertas—inquam—in eliciendo velle vel nolle, que adeo sibi naturaliter inest, quod inconueniens non sit fateri quod, si Deus illam abstulerit, voluntas penitus non manebit; erit enim illa vis aliaque potentia, non voluntas." Thus, for Salutati the notion of necessity is not absolute: it effects causes, it cannot compel the will; see p. 20: "Necessario, inquam, non absolute, sed ex illa, quam premisimus, causarum et ordinis suppositione, non necessitate que coget voluntatem, sed que producat effectum . . ." See also e.g., pp. 55–56. One of Ficino's teachers at the University of Florence, Niccolò Tignosi, would also disagree with him here; see *Nicolai Tignosii Fulginatis ad Cosmam Medicem in illos qui mea in Aristotelis comentaria criminantur opusculum*, in Sensi, 'Niccolò Tignosi da Foligno. L'opera e il pensiero', p. 475: "Cuncta in celestia corpora referentes, causasque fatales que sollicitis nostris curis, ut aiunt, a data dispositione mutari non possunt, immo quicquid facimus venit ex alto. Liberum arbitrium, cunctaque humana consilia de medio remouentes, nos duci velut pecora clamitant et affirmant. Illud velut precipuum asserentes, scilicet quoniam fati agimus, fati credendum est." On Tignosi see also Chapter Eight, n. 8 below.

84 This argument is cited and discussed in Alliney, 'La ricezione della teoria scotiana della volontà nell'ambiente teologico parigino (1307–1316)', p. 347: "Non est simile de voluntate in via respectu finis . . . quia voluntas potest se auertere a fine . . ."

Vincenzo criticizes the changeable and unsteady relations between God and man implied in Ficino's description; such a state would be mixed with sadness (*tristitia*), and thus, it turns happiness into something less perfect:

But if such a vision were not perpetual, then the blessed would know that some time they are going to lose it, because while seeing the divine essence they know fully all things which determine their own condition. Therefore, such a vision would be present in them mixed with sadness, and thus it would not make them blessed, since happiness is the perfect good which excludes any evil.⁸⁵

Vincenzo emphasizes (on pp. 241–242) that this vision, which turns us into *beati*, is something which we cannot lose; having it is a stable state; otherwise it would cause us to suffer, and thus it would not be perfect.⁸⁶ Vincenzo's discussion of the status of the *beatus* is a response to Scotus' discussion of the transformation from *status viae* towards *status patriae*, and from *viator* towards *beatus*.⁸⁷ Only the intellect can ensure constancy and steadiness in connection with our relations with God.

Vincenzo insists on a one way procedure: once we hold God's vision, we do not lose it; and through it we reach eternal happiness. This is for him a good opportunity to attack the Pythagorean doctrine of the transmigration of the souls, both in the Neoplatonists and in Origen:

But through this argument the mistake of the Platonists is excluded; they argued that separated souls, after they have attained the supreme

85 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 241: "Si autem talis visio non esset perpetua scirent [beati] se illam quandoque amissuros quia videntes divinam essentiam sciunt omnia maxime quae eorum statum concernunt. Talis ergo visio adesset eis cum tristitia et sic non eos beatos faceret quia beatitudo est bonum perfectum omne malum excludens."

86 On the stability of the will in regard God see e.g., Peter Aureol, *Scriptum super primum Sententiarum*, 2 vols., ed. Eligius M. Buytaert (New York 1952–1956), vol. 1, p. 452: "Secunda propositio est quod voluntas immutabiliter elicit actum complacentiae circa Deum in patria clare visum. Constat enim quod voluntas beati confirmata est, ut peccare non possit, nec omittendo Dei dilectionem, nec committendo aliquid oppositum dilectioni divinae. Haec ergo confirmatio aut oritur ex conditione voluntatis in ordine ad tale obiectum; aut oritur ex habitu voluntatem ligante ad ipsum; aut oritur ex divina omnipotentia conservante et manutenente in voluntate dilectionis actum, ne avertere voluntas se possit nec subtrahere ab illo actu."

87 Alliney, 'La ricezione della teoria scotiana della volontà nell'ambiente teologico parigino (1307–1316)', p. 244.

happiness (*ultima felicitas*), want (*velle*) to begin again to return to the bodies, and to be involved again with the finite happiness (*finita felicitas*) of this life and with the miseries of this life. Also the mistake of Origen is excluded; while sticking too much to the doctrines of the Platonists he argued that the souls and angels, after adopting happiness (*beatitudo*), can again turn to misery.⁸⁸

- 88 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 242: “Per hoc autem excluditur error Platoniorum qui dicebant animas separatas postquam felicitatem ultimam adeptae fuissent iterum ad corpora incipere velle redire et finita felicitate illius vitae iterum miseriis huius vitae involvi. Excluditur etiam error Origenis qui dictis Platoniorum nimis inhaerens dixit animas et angelos post adeptam beatitudinem iterum posse ad miseriam devenire.” Kristeller does not give the source of Vincenzo here: a possible remote source might be Augustine’s *De civitate Dei* 14, 5, where we find the *Platonici* and the *Manichaei*, and a citation from Virgil’s *Aeneid* 6, 719–721, and the expression, in regard to the souls: “... cum rursus incipiunt in corpora velle reverti ...” Another place is *De civitate Dei* 21, 3, where we have the *Platonici*, and again a citation from Virgil’s *Aeneid* 6, 720, and the same expression regarding the souls. Augustine does not mention Origen and the angels in these two contexts, so this information might have come from another source. It looks as though someone else, who also knew his Augustine, (or Augustine himself in another passage and with somewhat different words) used these passages, but connected them to Origen. The whole phrase “rursus incipiunt in corpora velle reverti” appears in both passages in exactly the same words. This already shows a common source. In 14, 5, we have the whole quotation from Virgil, *Aeneid* 6, 719–721. This includes the phrases ‘dira cupido’ (which gave rise to ‘velle’), and ‘ad tarda reverti’ (which gave rise to ‘ad corpora reverti’). In 21, 3, we only have ‘dira cupido’. The emphasis is clearly on the souls willing to return. Obviously, Augustine’s source, which is critical of the Platonists on this point (as is Augustine), takes these words of Aeneas to be an implicit criticism of the Platonist view as he saw it. But Plato’s myth at the end of *Republic* X, clearly does not imply this. In 617b8–e5 the choice of life and the return of the souls to earth is conducted by the three daughters of *Ἀνάγκη*, or of *Μοῖραι*, indeed the three *Μοῖραι*. What may have given rise to ascribing the desire to come back to this world to the souls themselves is the fact that each of them chooses—or rather has chosen—its sort of future life (see 619e6–621b7). Someone may not have realize that the souls are indeed free to choose the sort of life they will live, but the necessity itself to return to life is dictated by *Ἀνάγκη*. Augustine does not use *velle* in these contexts in the strong sense. Vincenzo puts it in the context of his dispute with Ficino and here, I argue, the implication is a critique of Ficino’s voluntarism. A critique of this Pythagorean doctrine by a scholastic author against a humanist (and against the study of pagan authors in general) was not new: Dominici attacked Salutati also on this point in his *Lucula noctis*. See Iohannis Dominici, *Lucula noctis*, ed. Edmund Hunt (Notre Dame, Indiana 1940), e.g., p. 180. See also the discussion of this issue in Hankins, *Plato in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Leiden 1990), vol. 1, p. 38. Another contemporary critique of the Platonic doctrine of the transmigration of the souls can be found in Matteo Bossi’s *De veris ac salutaribus animi gaudiis dialogus*, mentioned in Hankins, ‘Lorenzo de’ Medici

It is remarkable how Vincenzo uses *velle* in this context, as if the souls want to come back into the misery of this world. All of a sudden *voluntas* and the implied *libertas* become part of this pagan doctrine (while keeping the distinction between the pagan and Christian contexts through interchanging *felicitas/beatitudo*). The relation between the Platonists or Origen (two sources which Ficino cites very often; Origen, who has a problematic status in the history of Christianity, is one of Ficino's few cited sources in his *De Christiana religione*, which was written and published during these years)⁸⁹ and *voluntas* here is ascribed to Ficino. Apparently Vincenzo too knows something about rhetoric.⁹⁰

Two other points are relevant to our discussion. First, the Latin style: notice how *velle*, *incipere* and *redire*, three infinitives together, both produce intensity but also emphasize *velle*. This is, in fact, a rhetorical emphasis and a direct critique of the voluntarism of Ficino, which has nothing to do with the doctrine mentioned. Second, the implication of the critique here is not only in regard to Ficino and his programme of synthesis between Neoplatonism and Christianity, through the notion of ancient theology and theologians like Pythagoras, and in the wider context, in regard to the relation between *humanae litterae* and *sacrae litterae*: such topics were discussed in Florence during almost the whole fifteenth century by figures such as Salutati, Dominici,

as a Patron of Philosophy', p. 282 and n. 21 there. Compare Pietro Pomponazzi's moral explanation of this Pythagorean doctrine in his *Tractatus de immortalitate animae*, ed. Thierry Gontier (Paris 2012), p. 11: "Quidam vero, ex toto neglecto intellectu solisque vegetativae et sensitivae [animae] incumbentes, quasi in bestias transmigraverunt. Et hoc fortassis voluit apologus pythagoreus, cum dixit animas humanas in diversas bestias transire."

- 89 The first edition of the Latin version was published in Florence between November 10 and December 10, 1476; the first edition of the Italian version was published in Florence probably before March 25, 1475. See Vasoli, *Quasi sit deus—studi su Marsilio Ficino*, p. 120. For some of Ficino's references to Origen see Ficino, *De Christiana religione*, in *Opera*, vol. 1, pp. 5, 7–8; *Della Christiana religione* (Florence 1568), pp. 30, 33–34, 36, 52. For Origen in the Italian Renaissance see Charles Stinger, 'Italian Renaissance Learning and the Church Fathers', in Irena Backus (ed.), *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West From the Carolingians to the Maurists*, 2 vols. (Leiden 1997), vol. 2, pp. 473–510; especially p. 499.
- 90 But it is not mere rhetoric: it is related to the status of Pythagorean doctrines among Florentine priests and friars; see, for instance, the cases of Lorenzo Pisano and Antonio degli Agli discussed in Field's *The Origins of the Platonic Academy*, especially pp. 158–174, and the case of the *Symbolum Nesianum* and the Camaldolese monks in Santa Maria degli Angeli in Florence discussed in Celenza's *Piety and Pythagoras*, pp. 34–40. This is, of course, an issue for further study based on manuscripts and unstudied texts as well as archival documents. See also the discussion of Pisano in Chapter Eight of this volume.

Antoninus, Scala, Pisano, Agli, Savonarola, Marcello de Virgilio Adriani and others; but we have here also a critique of the Scotist doctrine of freedom such as the one mentioned above, by Alexander of Alexandria (*quia voluntas potest se avertere a fine*). Here it is the separated souls which, of their own free will, turn away from eternal spiritual happiness and return to corporeal misery and finite happiness. What we have here is a critique, on Platonic-Pythagorean grounds, by a Dominican theologian, of the Scotist notion of freedom and will, which, as we have seen, is not fully represented by Ficino, since we do not have in his letter the basic Scotist assumption: *libertas et voluntas convertuntur*.⁹¹

Such a remark concerning the *error Platoniorum* is a good example of the dialectic and mutual influence and criticism between humanists and humanist-oriented philosophers on the one hand and scholastic philosophers on the other: Vincenzo in his critique of Ficino was tempted to mention the Platonists, who are so important to Ficino; he is not any longer on the safe Aristotelian and Thomistic ground: he has left his more traditional Dominican preferences which were so obvious at the beginning of his treatise. He has changed through his critique of the humanist-oriented philosopher Ficino, and he is now using Platonic assumptions as part of his own critique. But still, obvious differences exist, and thus at the beginning of his *solutio rationum*, the last part of his discussion, Vincenzo presents a methodological remark, due to the fact that he is not writing to another professional theologian, but rather to Lorenzo de' Medici; it seems that he feels that he has to explain what was obvious among the scholastics, and it should remind us again of the existence of the two traditions and of some gaps between them.⁹²

Here, in the last part, Vincenzo returns to the image used by Ficino, of the two wings of the soul. Unlike Ficino, who, as we have seen, is "all out in favour of the will", Vincenzo declares that

Thus, also in the premise, the soul is worthy (*meretur*) on account of the will, but is rewarded (*praemiatur*) first on account of the intellect.⁹³

91 Alliney, 'La ricezione della teoria scotiana della volontà nell'ambiente teologico parigino (1307–1316)', p. 342.

92 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 243: "Quia cognitio veritatis, ut ait Aristoteles in tertio *Metaphysicae*, solutio est dubitatorum, in hac postrema parte rationes in oppositum primo loco adductae, ut veritas iam declarata magis elucescat, sunt clare aperteque solvendae."

93 *Ibid.*, pp. 243–244: "Ita et in proposito anima voluntate meretur, sed intellectu principaliter praemiatur."

Ficino also used, just after the description of the two wings (*geminæ alae*), the terms *mereri* and *premium*:

... since as much as we, in God's eyes, are more worthy (*meremur*), in this life, on account of loving than on account of inquiring, so much in the next life, the reward (*premium*) is attributed more to love than to inquiry.⁹⁴

I think that Vincenzo reflects here this sentence of Ficino, but he is really trying to balance between *voluntas* and *intellectus*, and in this respect he is more loyal to the Platonic image described by Ficino, or to the more classical notion of the will and the intellect in our soul (ὄρεξις and νοῦς, *appetitus* and *mens*), as might be reflected in his sources, cited as the authorities for his argument here: Aristotle, Augustine, and Thomas.⁹⁵ He is describing here the difference between two possibilities of locating *praemium*: in one sense it is in the soul, since the soul which is worthy is that part which is rewarded (*quod anima quae meruit ipsa est quae praemiatur*, p. 243); but in another sense, it is right and proper that the reward should correspond as much as possible to all things (*merito praemium correspondeat quantum ad omnia*), and not, as in the first case, only according to the proportional quantity of the reward (*secundum quantitatem meriti proportionabiliter*). Thus, the reward would certainly be in the same part which potentially would precede the reward (*ut scilicet praemium sit in eadem parte potentiali in qua meritum praecessit*, p. 243). In this sense it is not the soul, or rather the will in the soul, through which we receive the beatific reward:

Indeed the beatific reward first of all and chiefly belongs to this power, the quality of which is to receive. But reception first of all appertains to the intellect. And therefore, although merit is first attributed to the will,

94 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 204: "... quia quanto magis apud Deum in hac vita meremur amando quam inquirendo, tanto maius in illa vita premium amori quam inquisitioni tribuitur."

95 Bandello, *Opusculum*, pp. 244–245; see, e.g., p. 245: "Ad idem respondet S. Thomas in quaestionibus *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 5, ad quintum. *Intellectus*, inquit, *praecedit voluntatem in via receptionis*, quia nihil potest velle voluntas nisi id primo in intellectu recipiatur, ut dicitur in tertio *De anima*. At voluntas praecedat intellectum *in movendo seu agendo* ... *Praemium autem dicitur per modum receptionis, sed meritum per modum actionis. Et inde est quod totum praemium beatificum principaliter ascribitur intellectui, unde dei visio dicitur tota merces beatitudinis* ... *Meritum autem principaliter caritati attribuitur quae perficit voluntatem quae movet omnes potentias ad operandum opera meritoria*."

still the reward should first be attributed to the intellect, the quality of which is to receive within itself the divine perfection.⁹⁶

This is a much more balanced solution, which does not exclude the will, but rather presents the function of the will as subordinate to the power of the intellect in our soul. Vincenzo carefully rearranges the relations between *voluntas* and *intellectus*, *dilectio* and *desiderium*, the *meritum* and the *praemium* (and again omits *amor*), thus:

But since cognition precedes love (*dilectio*) in reaching the ultimate intelligible end, therefore it is more powerful in obtaining the reward. For the intellect first apprehends the intelligible end, then the will is moved towards this end through love (*dilectio*) and desire in which worth consists; afterwards the intellect pursues and reaches the end itself, and in this the reward chiefly consists.⁹⁷

Thus, we arrive at the doctrinal distinction between *status in via* and *in patria*, in correlation to the function of the will and the intellect:

Similarly they [Augustine and Thomas] approve of the view that the act of love (*caritas*) and will with regard to God is more powerful and noble than the act of the intellect in the present temporal life, but they do not approve of the view that in the next life, in the heavenly fatherland, it would be more noble and powerful in regard to the reward, as has been demonstrated above.⁹⁸

While in Ficino's letter there was no place for the intellect and the intellectual acts in regard to *beatitudo*, and his notion of the will was completely lacking in

96 *Ibid.*, p. 244: "Praemium vero beatificum ad illam potentiam primo et principaliter pertinet cuius est recipere. Receptio autem primo pertinet ad intellectum. Et ideo licet meritum per prius attribuat voluntati, praemium tamen per prius attribuitur intellectui cuius est divinam perfectionem intra se recipere."

97 *Ibid.*, pp. 245–246: "Sed quia cognitio praeminet dilectioni in attingendo ultimum finem intelligibilem, ideo est potior in consecutione praemii. Nam finem intelligibilem primo apprehendit intellectus, deinde voluntas movetur in ipsum per dilectionem et desiderium in quo meritum consistit, postea intellectus ipsum assequitur et adipiscitur et in hoc consistit principaliter praemium."

98 *Ibid.*, p. 246: "Similiter probant quod actus caritatis et voluntatis respectu dei sit potior et nobilior actu intellectus in statu viae, sed non probant quod in patria sit nobilior et potior in praemio, ut supra ostensum est."

the essential notion of freedom (and thus cannot be considered as related to Scotist doctrines)—and, in addition, no distinction was made between *status in via* and *status in patria*—Vincenzo's discussion is not only far closer, as one might expect, to the theological and doctrinal discussions of this question in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but it is also more related to some of the classical notions regarding the human soul, as we have also seen in his discussion of wealth (*pecunia*).⁹⁹

While the vision of God is, according to Vincenzo, the ultimate end of the *beatus*, delight (*delectatio*) and joy (*gaudium*) are only the effects, or instruments for something which is better.¹⁰⁰ As we have seen, Ficino in the letter does not distinguish between *viator in via* and *beatus in patria*, and he omits completely the act of the intellect in achieving happiness. But Vincenzo, as we have seen, still pays attention to *voluntas*, *gaudium*, and *delectatio*, and here, he is following Thomas (*Summa theologiae* 1a–2ae, q. 4, a. 1 and 4):

In one way just like preparation towards happiness itself, so the rightness of the will is required for happiness . . . and thus joy and delight in regard to God and His vision are required for happiness . . .¹⁰¹

But then he concludes:

Therefore, the vision of God is just like the possession of the ultimate end, the supreme good, and is desired for its own sake, and joy and every operation of rational creature is subordinated to this vision.¹⁰²

99 This does not mean, of course, that Ficino, in other texts, does not discuss both the intellect and the will; see, e.g., *Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum*, vol. 4, pp. 16–18. As Kristeller has shown, Ficino struggled with this issue throughout his career. But our concern here is Vincenzo's critical response to Ficino's letter in this specific theological dispute. In the course of a dispute, the participants tend to adopt more extreme points of view, in order to overcome and refute opposed arguments and persuade the other side (in this case, Lorenzo), and this is what happened to Ficino.

100 Bandello, *Opusculum*, pp. 246–248; see also on p. 250: “Ex quibus patet quod visio dei quae propter se appetitur et non propter aliud quod sit finis vel forma bonitatis suae est magis propter se desiderata quam delectatio quae est appetibilis propter aliquid aliud a quo suam formalem sortitur bonitatem.”

101 *Ibid.*, p. 248: “Uno modo sicut praeambulum et praeparatorium ad ipsam, et sic rectitudo voluntatis requiritur ad beatitudinem”; “...et sic gaudium et delectatio de deo et de visione eius ad beatitudinem requiritur.”

102 *Ibid.*: “Visio igitur dei ut est habitio ultimi finis est summum bonum et propter se ipsam desideratur et ad eam gaudium et omnis operatio creaturae rationalis ordinatur.” The vision of God was one of the most difficult issues among Thomas' interpreters.

Vincenzo does not need to say more, since Ficino does not seem to be aware of the detailed theological discussions of this issue during the fourteenth century. We know, for instance, from the documentation of disputes which took place in the University of Paris, that already in the first years of the fourteenth century there was an internal critique of the Scotist doctrine regarding the contingency of enjoyment in the next life (*fruitio in patria*), which might prevent the *beatus* from certainty and stability in regard to *beatitudo*, among what is still regarded as the Scotist school.¹⁰³ Vincenzo's critique of this idea of the unstable state, which is the consequence of reaching happiness through the will only, as we have seen earlier, bears the echo of such detailed theological and philosophical discussions.

We have already seen that Vincenzo's discussion is more precise. Thus, he distinguishes between sensitive and intellectual appetite.¹⁰⁴ Again, such a distinction does not appear in Ficino's letter:

No appetite seeks something imaginary, but rather something substantial; otherwise, memory and imagination would be enough for someone who is eager for the absent good. But the vision of God is in us an imaginary thing and also, as I said before, finite. Wherefore, the act of the will, which is a turning towards the infinite God and a substantial diffusion,

103 Alliney, 'La ricezione della teoria scotiana della volontà nell'ambiente teologico parigino (1307–1316)', pp. 371–372: "Prende qui forma una delle obiezioni più fondate alla dottrina scotiana della contingenza della fruizione *in patria* obiezione che presto innescherà vivaci polemiche: già la questione del Maestro Ber. riporta una prima difesa scotista secondo la quale i precetti obbligano in un tempo e in un luogo determinati e perciò, dato che *in patria* si è fuori dal tempo, non si peccherebbe a trasgredire al comandamento di amare Dio sopra ogni cosa, come invece accade *in via*. In sintesi, ambedue i teologi individuano nelle diversa conoscenza del fine *in patria* il motivo del passaggio dalla contingenza alla necessità nell'azione volontaria, a conferma della fortuna in ambito parigino di tale dottrina, esplicitamente difesa dal cistercense Giacomo di Thérines—probabilmente confratello del Maestro Ber.—, da Alessandro d'Alessandria, forse da Ugo di Novocastro e, come si vedrà oltre, da Guglielmo di Alnwick e da Pietro Aureolo. Ambedue i teologi, poi, sottopongono la teoria di Scoto ad una nuova critica che non prende avvio dall'analisi metafisica delle potenze dell'anima, bensì dalla considerazione teologica dello stato del beato dopo la morte: l'assoluta contingenza della volontà toglierebbe al beato quella certezza che è parte della beatitudine stessa. Questa sembra essere una delle prime reazioni alla dottrina scotiana volta a contrastarne gli esiti più estremi, e inaugura una nuova linea argomentativa che, come si vedrà in seguito, impegnerà severamente i teologi scotisti nella ricerca di una soluzione filosoficamente e teologicamente accettabile."

104 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 248; and thus we find on p. 249: "Non est autem existimandum simpliciter aliquid tale secundum ordinem appetitus sensitivi sed magis secundum ordinem appetitus intellectivi."

has more relation to infinity than the act of understanding, which is a certain notion of God according to the capacity of the human mind.¹⁰⁵

Ficino relates the *appetitus* to *substantialis res*, and *visio Dei* to *imaginaria res*; while *visio Dei* in us is *imaginaria et finita res*, the assumption is that *appetitus* is in us more related to *substantialis et infinita ratio*, since it is closer to the act of the will which is more related to infinity than the act of understanding. The implication here is again that, while the human intellect is limited, the will represents a possibility of crossing the intellectual limits. But is our human will infinite? While Ficino emphasizes the limits of the human intellect, he hardly distinguishes between human and divine will. So we have the impression that man has *appetitus infinitus*, a ridiculous implication at the heart of Ficino's argument. Scotus does have a distinction here: the will is common to God and man, but while God's will is a pure perfection, man's will only participates in the freedom of the divine will, but not in its perfection, which obviously includes also infinity.¹⁰⁶ But since, as we have seen, Ficino does not relate the discussion of the will to freedom, it is difficult for him to distinguish between human and divine will.

And what about delight? Is it always good? It depends on its object, Vincenzo argues, following again Thomas (*Summa theologiae* 1a–2ae, q. 2, a. 6):

105 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 208: "Appetitus nullus rem imaginariam querit, sed substantialem, alioquin sufficeret appetenti absentis boni memoria atque imaginatio; visio autem Dei in nobis imaginaria res est et, ut supra dixi, finita. Quocirca voluntatis actus, qui est in Deum infinitum conversio substantialisque diffusio, rationem infinitatis magis habet quam actus intelligendi, qui est Dei notio quedam pro mentis capacitate."

106 Alliney, 'La ricezione della teoria scotiana della volontà nell'ambiente teologico parigino (1307–1316)', p. 342: "*Libertas praedicatur univoce de Deo et de homine*". Per Scoto anche la volontà in quanto perfezione dell'essere è un trascendentale: questo significa che la definizione formale della volontà si pone precedentemente alla distinzione modale fra essere finito ed essere infinito, e deve essere comune ai due modi dell'essere. Mentre in Dio la volontà si mantiene al livello di perfezione pura, nella creatura ciò non accade: la volontà umana dunque è libera come quella divina, ma non altrettanto perfetta"; and p. 377: "Scoto infatti, coerentemente all'impostazione generale della propria dottrina della volontà, aveva sostenuto che la perpetuità della beatitudine non deriva né dall'essenza stessa della beatitudine, né dalla natura della volontà, né dall'abito di carità del beato, ma solo dalla volontà divina che perfeziona la volontà creaturale nell'intensità dell'atto e la conserva poi perpetuamente in tale perfezione."

Whence it does not follow that delight would be the best thing and by itself the good in which happiness consists, but rather it follows that any specific delight would follow a certain good, and some delight would follow the thing which is by itself also the highest good.¹⁰⁷

The implication here is that there are two levels: one of the delights which can be different in quantity, in larger and smaller pleasures; and another level, of the absolute, always maximum, good.¹⁰⁸ The principle of analogy (*secundum quid idem, simpliciter diversum*) is at work here:

Indeed in this way everyone seeks for delight just as (*sicut*) everyone also seeks the good and its achievement, and still they seek delight because of the good and not the other way round, as had been said.¹⁰⁹

Vincenzo distinguishes between corporeal or sensible delight, which is an impediment to rational judgment and thus bad, and spiritual delight. Apparently, there is also sensible cognition and intellectual cognition; he approves of both cognition and delight which are intellectual, as opposed to sensible, but the emphasis here is not on cognition or delight, but on intellectual (*intellectualis*) rather than sensible (*sensibilis*) delight; these adjectives represent the direction or inclination of the two acts:

Indeed the virtuous avoids corporeal delights since they obstruct the judgment of reason and the desire for them causes man to be bad and intemperate . . . later it is said that there are not more people who seek spiritual delight which is in cognition, than those who seek that very cognition which causes the wonderful and most pure delight. But there are more who seek sensible delight than the cognition of the intellect. But happiness does not consist of either sensible cognition or delight, but

107 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 252: "Unde non sequitur quod delectatio sit maximum et per se bonum in quo beatitudo consistit, sed quod unaquaeque delectatio sequatur aliquid bonum, et aliqua delectatio consequatur id quod est per se et maximum bonum."

108 See, e.g., Henry of Ghent, *Summa questionum ordinariam*, a. 49, q. 5, E: "Sed de tali bono quod sic habet rationem finis, contingit loqui dupliciter. Uno modo ut in se consideratur, tanquam attingibile et perfectivum omnium. Alio modo secundum quod natum est attingi a diversis diversimode secundum diversitatem graduum et naturae suae."

109 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 252: "Eo quippe modo omnes appetunt delectationem sicut et appetunt bonum et consecutionem eius, et tamen delectationem appetunt ratione boni et non e converso, ut dictum est."

rather it essentially consists in intellectual cognition and consequently in its delight.¹¹⁰

Ficino, as we have seen, discusses only one delight, which is related to the will and opposed to the intellect and to intellectual operations.

Vincenzo, then, presents what he regards as logical problems in Ficino's argumentation: what is opposed to the worst vice (*humilitas* as the opposite of the greatest *vitium*, *superbia*) is not necessarily the greatest virtue, since the cardinal and theological virtues (*virtutes cardinales et theologicae*) are more noble than humility.¹¹¹ And even though timidity (*timiditas*) is better than avarice (*avaritia*), kindness (*liberalitas*), which is opposed to avarice, is not better than courage (*fortitudo*), which is the opposite of timidity. There is no symmetry between worst and best virtues. And thus,

Likewise this rule works only in opposed virtues because of direct moral opposition, when these opposed things hold the whole of goodness or of evil according to their object.¹¹²

Just as in the case of loving (*amare*) and hating (*odisse*). But

But God's vision and ignorance are not opposed in the genus of custom but of nature. Similarly, God's vision holds the whole of goodness from the side of its object, through which it is defined and from which it draws its nobility. But ignorance does not hold the whole of malice or objectionability out of its object, but rather from the circumstance of the agent who should have known. Whence an equal amount of ignorance is worse in one person than in another. Therefore it does not necessarily follow

110 *Ibid.*, p. 253: "Virtuosus enim delectationes corporeas refugit quia iudicium rationis impediunt et earum desiderium hominem malum et intemperatum efficit"; "Dicitur postremo quod non plures quaerunt delectationem spiritualem quae est in cognoscendo quam ipsam cognitionem ex qua mirabilis et purissima delectatio causatur. Sed plures sunt qui quaerunt delectationem sensibilem quam intellectus cognitionem. Beatitudo autem non consistit in cognitione vel delectatione sensibili, sed in cognitione intellectuali essentialiter et in eius delectatione consequenter."

111 *Ibid.*, p. 256: "Nam superbia est maximum omnium vitiorum. Est enim initium omnium malorum. Et tamen humilitas quae est virtus ei opposita non est maxima omnium virtutum, cum virtutes cardinales et theologicae sint ea nobiliores."

112 *Ibid.*: "Item illa regula tenet tantum in oppositis moraliter oppositione directa quando illa opposita habent totam bonitatem vel malitiam ex obiecto."

that if God's vision would be the highest good, its ignorance would be the supreme malice.¹¹³

Vincenzo, following Thomas (*Summa theologiae* 1a–2ae, q. 73, a. 4 and *De malo*, q. 2, a. 10), seems to explore a serious logical problem in Ficino's argument. Let us carefully examine Ficino's argument:

Just as in nature it would be regarded worse to suffer pain than to be ignorant, so it would be regarded better to be glad than to know; and just as nature always and everywhere runs away from pain, because of what it is, and it [regards pain] because of its nature as supreme malice, so it pursues pleasure because of its nature and pursues other things because of its [i.e. pleasure's] nature, [and regard pleasure] as the supreme good.¹¹⁴

Ficino compares the relation *dolere-ignorare* in nature, to *gaudere-nosse* in human affairs: while *dolere* in nature is worse than *ignorare*, its opposite, *gaudere*, is better than *nosse*, which is opposed to *ignorare*. It sounds perfect on the rhetorical level. But Vincenzo criticizes this last analogy (*sicut . . . ita . . .*), between knowing (*nosse*) and being ignorant (*ignorare*), since *nosse* refers to an external object, and *ignorare* to the person who does not know. We can also ask whether *dolere* and *gaudere* are really opposed, and whether *ignorare* as opposed to *dolere* in nature is the same as *ignorare* as opposed to *nosse* in human affairs—or, in other words, does the analogy between nature and human affairs work? But in fact, *nosse* can also refer to a person, and this is why Vincenzo prefers to discuss *visio dei* instead of *nosse*, as opposed to *ignorantia*, on two different levels (*ex obiecto* and *ex circumstantia personae quae debuit cognoscere*). So, Ficino's analogy can work if *nosse*, just like *ignorare*, refers to the person and not to the object. By changing Ficino's *nosse* into *visio dei* (and ignoring the level of human affairs, implied in Ficino's argument as analogous to nature), Vincenzo created another logical problem, since *visio dei*

113 *Ibid.*, p. 257: "Sed visio dei et ignorantia non opponuntur in genere moris sed naturae. Similiter visio dei habet totam bonitatem ex parte obiecti a quo specificatur et nobilitatem trahit. Ignorantia autem non habet totam malitiam vel fugibilitatem ex obiecto, sed etiam ex circumstantia personae quae debuit cognoscere. Unde aequalis ignorantia est maius malum in uno quam in altero. Ideo non oportet quod si visio dei sit maximum bonum, ignorantia eius sit summum malum."

114 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 206: "Natura sicut deterius existimat dolere quam ignorare, ita melius gaudere quam nosse; et sicut dolorem semper et ubique propter se fugit, et omnia propter ipsum tanquam summum malum, ita voluptatem sequitur propter se et alia propter ipsam, quasi summum bonum."

obviously refers to an external object and *ignorantia* to a person. What we have here are two good logical arguments by a humanist-oriented philosopher and a scholastic theologian: *nosse* and *ignorare* in human affairs and in regard to a person are opposed, and since in nature *dolere* is worse than *ignorare*, *gaudere*, the opposite of *dolere* in human affairs, is better than *nosse*, the opposite of *ignorare*; *visio dei* refers to an object and all its goodness derives from it, while *ignorantia* refers to the person and thus *non oportet quod si visio dei sit maximum bonum, ignorantia eius sit summum malum*.

After his unsuccessful logical critique, Vincenzo continues his critique of Ficino's argument from a theological aspect: pain (*dolor*) and sadness (*tristitia*) are not the supreme evil (*summum malum*), since pain which someone willingly took upon himself because of his sins is praiseworthy, and thus it is not delight which is opposed to pain as the supreme good, but rather God's vision.¹¹⁵ Here he is more successful, since Ficino does not seem to be careful enough in his analogy between things in nature and the theological level of *summum malum/bonum*. Not every pain is bad even on the natural level, since as we know, some medical treatments can cause pain but are essential and thus good. Likewise, pleasure can sometimes cause damage, and thus should be regarded as bad (for instance, eating too much).¹¹⁶ But Ficino, quite rashly, jumps from the natural to the theological level, and Vincenzo refutes his arguments by discussing other aspects of *dolor* in a theological context, and by using citations from the Scriptures and Augustine.¹¹⁷ Here again, Ficino seems not to take into serious consideration the *conditio humana* and thus Vincenzo concludes:

It was said, in addition, that just as natural desire exists in all human beings in regard to knowledge, so natural desire exists in them to dispel and to run a way from ignorance and lack of knowledge. Therefore, it is

115 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 257: "...dolor pro peccatis voluntarie assumptus laudabilis est..."; p. 258: "Non est igitur delectatio quae dolori opponitur summum bonum, sed visio dei..."

116 We have the classical Stoic argument on medical treatments and the good and truthful physician, in Seneca's *De constantia sapientis* I, 1: "Ceteri sapientes molliter agunt et blande, ut fere domestici et familiares medici aegris corporibus non qua optimum et celerrimum est medentur, sed qua licet; Stoici, virilem ingressi viam, non ut amoena ineuntibus videatur curae habent, sed ut quam primum nos eripiat et in illum editum vericem educat, qui adeo extra omnem teli iactum surrexit ut supra fortunam emineat."

117 Bandello, *Opusculum*, pp. 257–258.

not true that all human beings run away from pain and do not run away from ignorance.¹¹⁸

There are people who do not run away from pain (if it is in a good cause, like pains caused by acts of penitence), and there are some who run away from ignorance. Here Vincenzo returns to the first part of Ficino's argument and criticizes the implication there, that *ignorare* is better than *nosse*.

While, as we have seen, Ficino emphasized the unifying power of *amor*, through which our soul becomes divine, and contrasted it to *videre* and *considerare*,¹¹⁹ Vincenzo distinguishes between two kinds of unions: union through the act of the intellect and union through the act of the will; the second one is consequent in regard to happiness and completes the first union,¹²⁰ and it is one of many things which perfect happiness, but

Therefore, happiness essentially consists in this act which first unites the rational creature to God. But the first union of the soul with God is through the act of the intellect, while the second union is through volition.¹²¹

Then, while trying to refute Ficino's argument, and having used in his discussion of *duplex unio* three times the word *anima*,¹²² Vincenzo uses, like Ficino, the word *animus*.¹²³ Once again we see how the critique of Ficino forces Vincenzo to use different terms from those which he would usually employ. While Ficino emphasizes the unifying power of *amor* (*vis amoris in unione . . . sed ex eo quod amat fit divinus*), and when he mentioned *gaudium*, it is *amatorium gaudium*, Vincenzo contrasts only *gaudium* to *visio*, completely ignoring Ficino's emphasis on *amor*. He relates this *gaudium* to *fruitio* and *delectatio* mentioned earlier

118 *Ibid.*, p. 258: "Dicitur ulterius quod sicut naturale desiderium inest omnibus hominibus ad sciendum, ita inest eis naturale desiderium ignorantiam atque nescientiam pellendi ac fugiendi. Non est igitur verum quod omnes homines dolorem fugiant et non ignorantiam."

119 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 206: "...vis autem amoris in unione, proprius unimur Deo per amatorium gaudium . . . et sicut non qui videt bonum, sed qui vult fit bonus, sic animus non ex eo quod Deum considerat, sed ex eo quod amat fit divinus . . ."

120 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 258.

121 *Ibid.*: "Beatitudo ergo essentialiter consistit in illo actu qui primo unit creaturam rationalem deo. Prima autem coniunctio animae ad deum est per actum intellectus, ultima vero coniunctio est per affectum."

122 *Ibid.*

123 *Ibid.*, p. 259: "Nec animus noster per gaudium magis divinus fit quam per visionem."

in the discussion of the secondary union (*Alia est unio per actum voluntatis, quo anima unitur deo per fruitionem et delectationem*, p. 258), and thus

But as much as joy itself rises above the first union, so it more perfectly unites us with God, just as also through joy itself essential happiness is perfected.¹²⁴

But where is *amor*? It has no place in Vincenzo's discussion of the union of our soul with God. Unlike *anima-animus*, where Vincenzo used Ficino's terminology, in regard to *amor* (and in the context of the union with God), he still prefers *delectatio*, *fruitio*, and *gaudium*, as related to the secondary *unio per actum voluntatis*.

For Vincenzo *amor* is in the same category as *delectatio*, *fruitio*, *gaudium*, the effects of the secondary union with God through the will. But as we have seen, he prefers to use *delectatio* and *gaudium* rather than *amor*. His real problem with Ficino the theologian, dealing with an issue such as the union of our soul with God and the function of the intellect/will in this union, is the lack of distinction between *status viae* and *status patriae*. He develops and extends then his critique of Ficino on the question of *gaudium* and *visio* through which this union is taking place.¹²⁵ But it is impossible and meaningless for Vincenzo to discuss the union with God without this distinction. Ficino distinguishes between the human and the divine, but does not refer to the change in our condition from *viatores* to *beati*. According to Vincenzo, only through this change can we speak of a union with God.

This, then, is an important difference: while Ficino is focused, in his discussion of the union of our soul with God, on the relation between the human and the divine, Vincenzo is focused on what he regards as an essential precondition for such a union: the change from *viatores in via* to *beati in patria*. For Ficino the transformation is possible through *amor* and without using the scholastic terms. The divinity in man and the possibility of getting closer to divinity, to what is beyond, is at the centre, and not the terminological analysis of the human condition. *Viator* and *beatus* refer to man; Ficino offers a wholly different point of view, derived from Neoplatonic metaphysics; new definitions of theology and religion, derived from both pagan ancient sources and patristic theology, in contrast to scholastic theology. Thus, it is important to notice that Ficino discusses in fact a separated soul; whenever he deals with the

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*: "In quantum autem ipsum gaudium supervenit primae unioni sic perfectius nos unit deo, sicut et per ipsum essentialis beatitudo perficitur."

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 259–261.

preconditions, he always deals with the different stages of the ascent or the descent of the soul.¹²⁶ He transfers Neoplatonic notions into a Christian context which is still scholastic; yet by focusing on the soul, Ficino can concentrate on the relation between the human and the divine and neglect scholastic terminology which is focused on man's condition. The purification and ascent of the soul and its unification with God through *amor* enables him to focus on the human and the divine; the terms *viator* and *beatus* refer to man as a *compositum* and not as a separated soul; the *beatus* is wholly related to God, not only his soul; the *viator* is man as a whole or as a *compositum*.

Thus, we can say that Ficino and Vincenzo discuss two different objects. We are here at the heart of the difference and shift between humanist and scholastic theology. While *in statu viae* we can think of the act of the will as *dignior* than the act of the intellect, since it transfers itself to the object as having its existence in itself beyond the soul, when it is of a higher nature than the soul,¹²⁷ and in the same *status viae* the act of the intellect, in an imaginary way and according to its own mode, contains within itself this object;¹²⁸ i.e., *in statu viae* we can relate ourselves to a higher external object like God more through the will, since our weak human intellect is limited and can understand external objects only through its limited ability. But is the human will *in statu viae* related directly to God? It should only be regarded *dignior* to the intellect in this specific aspect: it can bring us out from the intellect's limits towards an external higher object. Vincenzo immediately cites Hugh of St. Victor and pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, who emphasize the limits of the human intellect as *intellectus viatoris*.¹²⁹

In *status patriae*, on the other hand, everything is different, and we do not have these limitations upon our intellect; thus, the blessed can clearly see, by means of his intellect, the divine essence face to face.¹³⁰ And he concludes:

126 See, e.g., books III and IV of his *Platonic Theology*.

127 Bandello, *Opusculum*, pp. 259–260: “tranfert se in obiectum ut habet esse in se ipso extra animam quando est altioris naturae quam anima.”

128 *Ibid.*, p. 260: “...modo imaginario secundum modum suum capit intra se obiectum illud...”

129 *Ibid.*: “...et propter hoc dicat Ugo de Sancto Victore quod dilectio dei supereminet cognitioni scilicet in statu viae, ubi deus non capitur obiective ab intellectu per essentiam, sed solum per aliquam speciem creatam quae ipsum imperfecte repraesentat, ex quo fit ut deus nobilius esse habeat ut est in se ipso quam ut est in intellectu viatoris qui eum per speculum videt et in aenigmate, impossibile dicente Dionysio nobis aliter relucere divinum radium nisi varietate sacrorum velaminum circumvelatum...”

130 *Ibid.*: “...in statu autem patriae ubi essentia divina non per aliquam creatam speciem sed ipsa immediate per se ipsam intellectui creato uniatur ut forma intelligibilis et non per

in this state, I say, the act of the intellect will be more noble than the act of the will.¹³¹ Vincenzo now proceeds to contrast the beatific vision with *delectatio*, *gaudium*, and *amor*.¹³² First, we should notice that in his discussion he returns to *anima* (mentioned three times). In this state the beatific vision by itself contains God, and He is contained by and within one who sees through essences and not, as previously claimed, only in an imaginary manner, and thus it is more noble than delight and joy and every act of the will through which the divine perfection is not grasped within the will itself, but by the will directing itself to God who is beyond itself.¹³³ Here Vincenzo presents yet another scholastic distinction between *modus inclinationis*, which is related to *amor* and *delectatio*, and is inferior to *modus informationis*, which is related to *visio*.¹³⁴ One notes that in his conclusion Vincenzo not only mentions again *anima*, but, again, he does not mention *amor*, but only *dilectio*, *gaudium*, and *delectatio*.¹³⁵ Cognition and not joy is the instrument through which the soul is transferred to God. Not another reference is made to *amor* in this context. In this state of *in patria*, the inner or internal understanding is much more important than the external one.¹³⁶ This conclusion derives, again, from the distinction between *in via* and *in patria*, a distinction which Ficino never made in his letter.

speculum et in *aenigmate*, sed *facie ad faciem* clare videbitur, non habebit divina essentia nobilior esse in se ipsa quam in intellectu beato, et per hoc non nobiliori modo attingetur a voluntate quam capiatur ab intellectu.”

131 *Ibid.*: “In illo inquam statu actus intellectus erit actu voluntatis nobilior.”

132 *Ibid.*, pp. 260–261.

133 *Ibid.*: “visio beatifica per quam habetur deus a vidente et intra videntem per essentiam et non modo imaginario, ut arguens asserebat, est nobilior delectatione et gaudio et omni voluntatis actu per quem divina perfectio non capitur intra ipsam voluntatem, sed tendit in deum extra se positum.”

134 *Ibid.*, p. 261: “Item per amorem et delectationem transformatur anima in deum amatum per modum inclinationis, sed per visionem transformatur in eum per modum informationis, in quantum per eam capit in se deum et ei assimilatur . . .”

135 *Ibid.*: “Nobilior autem est transformari in deum per modum informationis et assimilationis quam per modum inclinationis. Ideo nobilior est dei visio quam ipsius dilectio gaudium vel delectatio. Falsa igitur est minor propositio in qua dicebatur quod anima per gaudium transformatur in deum et non per cognitionem.”

136 *Ibid.*: “Et ad probationem dicitur quod bonum animae quod effective facit eam beatam quaerendum est extra naturam ipsius animae. Solus enim deus est bonum animae hoc modo. Sed bonum animae quo formaliter beata efficitur est aliquis actus animae in ipsa existens quo deus qui est bonum extrinsecum capitur ut praemium intra ipsam animam. Non enim praemiatur aliquis ex eo quod tendat et transferat se in aliquid quod est extra ipsum, sed ex eo quod bonum extrinsecum capit intra se.”

Vincenzo rejects the separation, sharply made and represented in Ficino's letter, between the intellect and the will, and between *visio*, and *gaudium* and *delectatio* (again, without *amor*; and using the term *anima*):

For if—which is impossible!—God were to divorce the will from the intellect and separate joy and delight from vision, then the soul would indeed see God, but it would not rejoice nor be delighted [by this vision]. Yet in this vision the natural desire of the intellect would be satisfied.¹³⁷

There cannot be a real separation between these functions in the soul: seeing God's vision produces joy and delight. It cannot be otherwise. For the sake of the dispute Vincenzo was willing to argue for the superiority of the intellect, certainly as a response to Ficino, but he is not willing to argue that in fact, and in regard to the *compositum* (since we are not separated souls), *voluntas*, *gaudium*, and *delectatio* are separated from *visio* and *intellectus*, or have no importance at all in regard to acquiring happiness. This composite of body and soul, intellect and will, is represented by the phrase *naturale intellectus desiderium*: apparently, also the intellect has natural desire. This should lead us to modify our notions as to what should be regarded as Thomism in late fifteenth-century Florence; for Vincenzo, there is no contrast between the intellect and the will: each has its own part in the *compositum*. Thus, *dei visio* and *fruitio* complete each other.¹³⁸ This is the case since Vincenzo is discussing the soul of the *compositum*, *anima*, which holds in itself the complete essence of *beatitudo* as its specific perfection, and not as its accidental perfection.¹³⁹ Thus, Vincenzo again argues that through the vision of God the soul becomes perfectly blessed, since it is related to the essential perfection of happiness, while through enjoyment, it is only related to accidental perfection.¹⁴⁰ Only for the sake of the dispute, and since Ficino made such a separation, Vincenzo reacts:

137 *Ibid.*, p. 263: "quod si per impossibile deus voluntatem ab intellectu seiungeret et gaudium seu delectationem a visione separaret, anima tunc videret quidem deum, sed non gauderet nec delectaretur. In ipso tamen naturale intellectus desiderium quiesceret."

138 *Ibid.*: "Est enim dei visio tota substantia beatitudinis. Fruitio vero summam delectationem importans quandam superaddit perfectionem."

139 *Ibid.*: "In tali quippe casu anima haberet in se essentiam beatitudinis completam quantum ad eius perfectionem specificam, non autem quantum ad perfectionem accidentalem."

140 *Ibid.*: "Ita et anima videns deum absque hoc quod delectetur est perfecte beata quo ad essentialem beatitudinis perfectionem, non autem quantum ad accidentalem, quae in fruitione consistit."

So in the first premise I say that enjoyment, as it includes the beginning of vision, adding to it besides the delight which [this enjoyment] in a complete way imports, is more noble than the vision itself. But if—which is impossible!—enjoyment were not to include vision and cognition, that is, if we could grasp cognition without enjoyment and enjoyment without cognition, in this case vision or cognition would be more noble than enjoyment.¹⁴¹

Only when *fruitio* includes *visio* it might add to it *delectatio*, and in this respect, it is more noble. But if they were to exclude each other, then *visio* and *cognitio* would be more noble. Vincenzo attacks in his conclusion here the separation made by Ficino:

For just as he claims, if God were to separate the intellect from the will, the intellect would be some rational form, but the will would be appetite without cognition. Indeed, who doubts that rational form is superior in dignity to appetite without cognition?¹⁴²

Because of this separation, the will would become mere appetite without cognition. But cognition is essential for happiness, and thus, for the blessed soul,¹⁴³ in which the intellect is not separated from the will, this blessed soul can also delight and enjoy. We see that Vincenzo represents a more complex notion of the relation between the intellect and the will in regard to the blessed soul, while Ficino sharply separated the will from the intellect, focusing on the will only in regard to happiness, but discussing in fact a separated soul and not the *compositum*, and thus leaving out of his discussion the concepts of *viator in statu viae* and *beatus in statu patriae*, which describe the human condition, while trying to focus on the relation between the human and the divine. But as we have seen, his idea of the will lacks any notion of freedom, and is related

141 *Ibid.*, pp. 263–264: “Ita in propositio dico quod fruitio ut includit initiative visionem addens super ipsam delectationem quam complete importat est ipsa visione nobilior. Sed si per impossibile fruitio excluderet visionem et cognitionem, ut scilicet capiamus cognitionem sine fruitione et fruitionem sine cognitione, in tali casu esset visio seu cognitio fruitione nobilior.”

142 *Ibid.*, p. 264: “Nam ut is asserit, si deus intellectum a voluntate seiungeret, esset intellectus forma quaedam rationalis, voluntas vero esset appetitus cognitione carens. Quis enim dubitat formam rationalem omnem appetitum cognitione carentem dignitate praecedere?”

143 *Ibid.*: “Nec est verum quod remota cognitione et sola voluntate remanente foelicitas remaneat, quia sine cognitione non plus esset anima beata quam foeliciter grave dum est in loco deorsum.”

instead to *amor*, which is a unifying power which somehow unifies us to God. This separation, Vincenzo argues, underestimates the status and importance of the will in adding delight and joy (accidental qualities) to the blessed soul (to which *visio* and *cognitio* are essential for *beatitudo*), and turns the will into a blind impulse.

Vincenzo then cites Thomas to clarify further the relations between the intellect and the will in regard to acquiring the end (*finis*).¹⁴⁴ Relation and mutual completeness (but without equality and without neglecting the superiority of the intellect and intellectual activity), instead of separation, is, according to Vincenzo, the right description of intellect/will in regard to happiness. The next citation from Thomas involves *caritas* as alternative to Ficino's *amor*—we have to remember that *eros/amor* as a cosmic power is a Neoplatonic notion adopted by Ficino, but it is perfectly alien to Vincenzo, who does not really know what to do with it—and the distinction between *in via* and *in patria*.¹⁴⁵ The act of *caritas* is not the substance of happiness itself (*ipsa substantia beatitudinis*), but only a certain inclination towards happiness *in statu viae*, or a certain quietness, since the happiness was already acquired, *in statu patriae*.

Vincenzo presents then an alternative analogy to Ficino's description of the two wings of the soul. The will and the intellect, the two powers of the human soul, are not equal (two wings), and they have different duties: the will, like the arm of a soldier who repels his enemy, moves the soul towards its reward (*merces* or *praemium*); while the intellect, like the head of the winning soldier, who receives the crown of victory, receives the reward.¹⁴⁶ In Vincenzo's

144 *Ibid.*, pp. 264–265: “Nam, ut dicit S. Thomas, *Prima Secundae*, q. 3, a. 4, ad tertium, *finem* intelligibilem *primo apprehendit intellectus*, deinde *motus a fine incipit in voluntate*, quae per desiderium inclinatur ad perfectam finis coniunctionem consequendam. Postea intellectus perfecte fini coniungitur. Postremo in fine iam per intellectum assecuto voluntas quietatur.” And see also on p. 265 another citation and discussion of Thomas on this issue.

145 *Ibid.*, p. 265: “Nam quia caritas in via *ordinat omnes virtutes in deum*, ipsius etiam erit in patria *ultima quietatio* in ipso. *Hoc autem non dat ei quod actus eius sit ipsa substantia . . . beatitudinis, sed quod sit vel inclinatio quaedam in beatitudinem sicut in statu viae vel quietatio quaedam in ipsa iam assecuta velut in statu patriae.*”

146 *Ibid.*, p. 266: “Nam ipsa anima quae laborat et meretur est quae et praemiatur. Sed non secundum eandem potentiam meretur et praemiatur. Meritum enim et labor in quodam motu consistunt. Ideo animae secundum voluntatem cuius est principaliter movere conveniunt. Merces autem seu praemium in recipiendo consistit. Ideo animae convenit secundum intellectum cuius est primo divinam perfectionem recipere. Anima ergo secundum voluntatem laborat et meretur et secundum intellectum mercedem recipit et praemiatur. Sicut miles meretur laborans brachio hostem expugnando, coronam vitae seu gloriae tanquam praemium recipit in capite.” Compare this example to Durandus' description of the act of the intellect and the will cited in n. 5 above.

analogy, both the arm and the head, the will and the intellect, are important, and unlike Ficino he does not forget to provide an assessment of each of these two powers. The power to move towards happiness and the power to receive happiness are both important for our soul; but movement without the ability of receiving is of course useless.

Vincenzo rejects *delectatio*, the consequence of the act of the will, as a criterion for true happiness. The will and the verbs which describe its acts (*desiderare, amare, delectare*), are blind and act indifferently (*indifferenter*) in what concerns true and false happiness; every joyful thing can be related in the will to the *summum bonum*, since the will's criterion is *delectatio*.¹⁴⁷ According to Vincenzo, only the act of the intellect can be used as a criterion for judging true and false happiness.¹⁴⁸ Thus, true happiness consists in the act of the intellect: *visio*.¹⁴⁹

Vincenzo now adds to his discussion a new and essential element, which is missing in Ficino's letter, divine illumination:

But they will see God more clearly, whose intellects will be illuminated by the light of greater and larger glory . . . therefore the grade of glorious light in God's vision constitutes the grade of which happiness essentially consists. From this light different grades of joy and delight are produced.¹⁵⁰

The intellect needs divine illumination in order to see more clearly; from this clear sight derive *diversi gradus gaudii et dilectionis*. This is the right hierarchy according to Vincenzo.¹⁵¹ The following description by Ficino is thus impossible for him:

147 *Ibid.*: "Non enim vera beatitudo differet a falsa per actum voluntatis sed per actum intellectus. Nam voluntas eodem modo se habet in desiderando, amando vel delectando, quicquid sit illud quod sibi sub ratione summi boni proponitur sive vere sive falso. Nec unius dicitur vera beatitudo quia in eo delectatur quod sibi proponitur, alterius vero falsa ex eo quod in ipso non delectetur, cum utriusque voluntas in eo quod sibi sub ratione summi boni proponitur indifferenter delectetur."

148 *Ibid.*, p. 267: "Sed hoc differt ex parte intellectus. Nam vera beatitudo est cui intellectus adaequatur, falsa vero quae ab intellectu dissonat atque discordat."

149 *Ibid.*

150 *Ibid.*: "Clarius autem deum videbunt quorum intellectus maiori et ampliori lumine gloriae illustrabuntur . . . Gradus ergo luminis gloriosi in dei visione gradum constituit in qua beatitudo essentialiter consistit. Ex qua diversi gradus gaudii et dilectionis causantur."

151 We can find, of course, in Ficino's *Platonic Theology*, a Neoplatonic version of his theory of divine illumination of the human intellect, accompanied by a citation from Paul; see, e.g., Ficino, *Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum*, vol. 4, p. 16: "Nullus autem sanae

Whenever we see the abyss of divine infinity in a remiss and indeed in an obscure manner, still passionately and ardently we love and similarly we enjoy it. Vision is not, as some people think, the measure of joy: indeed a man who does not see sufficiently can still love much and vice versa. And then, this is the supreme good of the soul, in which the soul is content; but the soul is not properly content by this vision of God: indeed, the vision which is grasped by the seeing soul is a created thing and thus finite in its grades of perfection, just like the soul; but the soul is never content with any created and finite good. Thus vision is not supreme.¹⁵²

Vision is here contrasted to love. Love stands here for both vision and illumination in Vincenzo's description. Vision, the act of the human intellect, is finite in the stages of perfection, it includes contradictions, since Ficino surprisingly relates it to *amare*, and it is dependent on the soul of the one who sees; Ficino's criterion here is *anima contenta*, and the soul would not be content with a mere created and finite good like vision. But Ficino is obviously contradicting his own argument since if, while seeing, someone can love or desire many contrasting things, then something is wrong not only with the act of seeing, but also with the act of loving. He seems to offer this formula to bridge the gap between our obscure sight of *divine infinitatis abyssum: intense tamen arden-*

mentis concesserit per formulam terminatam et infra deum intervallo longissimo, immo incomparabili, existentem apprehendi naturam infinitam ipsumque deum. Igitur mens, per formulam suam ex habitu eductam in actum, ideae divinae quadam praeparatione subnectitur; cui subnexa supra se surgit. Nulla enim res supra se umquam attolitur, nisi a superiore trahatur. Quo enim pacto aqua volat in aerem, nisi calore aeris elevetur? Facile autem et naturali quodam instinctu ipsa formula, cum sit ideae radius, resilit in ideam, secumque attolit mentem, cui est infusus hic radius. Qui cum reducitur in ideam, refluit in eam sicut fontem, ceu radius reperiussus in solem. Perque nodum huiusmodi unum aliquid ex mente et deo conficitur. Hinc Paulus divinus theologus inquit: 'Qui adhaeret deo unus fit spiritus.' This is a good example of Ficino's humanist theology; Ficino is aware of the theological and philosophical problem of the difference in nature between human intellect and divinity and presents his solution. But in the letter he presents another point of view, and is thus criticized by Vincenzo.

152 Ficino, *Lettere I*, pp. 207–208: "Ubi divine infinitatis abyssum remisse quidem et obscure prospicimus, intense tamen ardentemque amamus similiterque gaudemus. Non est, ut aliqui opinantur, visio mensura gaudii: potest enim qui parum videt amare multum atque contra. Denique illud est summum anime bonum, quo anima contenta est; non est autem contenta proprie ipsa visione Dei: visio enim que in anima vidente suscipitur, creata res est gradibusque perfectionis finita sicut et anima; non est autem anima contenta unquam creato aliquo finitoque bono. Visio igitur non est summum."

terque amamus similiterque gaudemus, i.e., the more we love passionately the more we enjoy. The measure of our joy is determined according to our love.

So, loving without seeing (and most importantly without divine illumination) is the right way according to Ficino, but when seeing and love are combined, then we can find ourselves loving opposite things. While in Scotus and the Scotists we find the problem that the will might involve the liberty not to will the *summum bonum*, a problem which we can trace back to Augustine's notion of the autonomy of the will to determine its own purpose,¹⁵³ Ficino seems to relate this liberty of contradiction to the act of seeing, the act of the human intellect, which is usually considered as determined by nature and thus not free. But by relating this act to *amare*, and thus describing a state of 'loving many contradicted things' he neglects the possibility that *amor* is the right instrument through which we can overcome our obscure sight produced by our weak, created, human intellect. Through love only, without seeing and without the help of divine illumination, we might remain in the dark. While trying to avoid the possibility that *visio* is the *summum bonum* of the soul, Ficino ends up endangering the credibility of *amor*. Again we can see that while Vincenzo is combining the act of the intellect and the act of the will, always keeping the superiority of the first but never totally neglecting the second, Ficino's 'all for the will' strategy presented in the letter leads him to contradictions and problematic conclusions.

In order to refute Ficino's argument that 'the more passionately we love, the more we enjoy' Vincenzo presents a detailed discussion,¹⁵⁴ in which he introduces, following Thomas, a near and a far principle (*principium propinquum et remotum*) which distinguishes between grades of happiness: the first depends on divine illumination, which illuminates and perfects the intellects of the blessed, and through the perfection of divine vision the grade of happiness is determined.¹⁵⁵ The second is according to the reward (*meritum*), and thus the principle in which the grade of happiness is determined is according to *caritas*.¹⁵⁶ Then he goes on to distinguish three grades of happiness: anteced-

153 Alliney, 'Fra Scoto e Ockham: Giovanni di Reading e il dibattito sulla libertà a Oxford (1310–1320)'; p. 247.

154 Bandello, *Opusculum*, pp. 267–268.

155 *Ibid.*, p. 267: "... *diversa dispositio* beatos perficiens *ex qua* continget diversitas perfectionis *in operatione* qua deo coniunguntur. Et hoc modo gradus beatitudinis per lumen gloriae quo intellectus beatorum perficietur distinguuntur *secundum cuius augmentum* perfectio divinae visionis augebitur in qua ut saepe dictum est beatitudo essentialiter consistit."

156 *Ibid.*: "... diversitas meriti *quo* tandem *beatitudinem* sunt consecuti, et hoc modo distinguuntur gradus beatitudinis *secundum caritatem* quae est omnium meritorum principium."

ent (*antecedenter*), essential (*essentialiter*), and suitable (*consequenter*).¹⁵⁷ The first involves *caritas* and the distinction between *in via* and *in patria*;¹⁵⁸ the second involves divine illumination.¹⁵⁹ He directly criticizes Ficino for his notion of *amor*,¹⁶⁰ and for discussing the relation between man and a higher hierarchy (angles), without making the distinction between the present state and the future state, or mentioning the essential aid of the glorious divine light.¹⁶¹ These distinctions enable *dilectio* to be superior to *cognitio* in the present state, since in this state the intellect is weak and can have a notion of God only through its limited and created capacity;¹⁶² but the intellect in the future state is completely different:¹⁶³ the limits of the human intellect do not exist there (*ibi*) any longer; only then can we discuss the union of *mens* with the divine essence, and the notion of infinite God can be grasped and loved more than that of any other creature. Only under these conditions of the intellect *in patria* is Vincenzo willing to mention *amare*, in regard to the union of our soul with God. In the conclusion Vincenzo presents again the relation, and not the contrast, between the intellect and the will.¹⁶⁴

157 *Ibid.*, pp. 267–268.

158 *Ibid.*, p. 268: “Antecedenter quidem per diversitatem meritorum distinguuntur et sic secundum diversos gradus caritatis et dilectionis in via erit et diversus gradus beatitudinis in patria.”

159 *Ibid.*: “Essentialiter autem et formaliter distinguuntur per diversitatem luminis gloriosi quo intellectus beatorum diversimode illustrabitur, secundum cuius augmentum et perfectio divinae visionis augebitur in qua essentialiter beatitudo consistit.”

160 *Ibid.*: “... beatitudo non est bonum utile nec delectabile sed honestum, quod propter se quaeritur et ad aliud non est ordinabile. Tale autem bonum non est amor neque delectatio sed perfecta claraque dei visio...” One notices the Stoic definition of *honestum* here, which is probably derived from Cicero.

161 *Ibid.*, p. 269: “Nam in statu viae nec amando nec cognoscendo angelos superare possumus. In statu patriae et in cognitione et in dilectione homines munere gloriosi luminis adiuti ad aequalitatem assumuntur angelorum.”

162 *Ibid.*, p. 270.

163 *Ibid.*, p. 271: “Intellectus enim in patria non obscure, ut arguebatur, sed clare et aperte deum prospiciet videbitque deum esse infinitum et plus posse cognosci et amari quam ab aliqua creatura fiat. Nec etiam ibi deum videbimus per conceptum in mente nostra formatum, ut argumentum asserere videbatur, sed mens divinae essentiae per se ipsam unita deum per actum suum immediate facie ad faciem contemplabitur.”

164 *Ibid.*, p. 278: “Ex quibus patet intellectum simpliciter et per se esse voluntate nobiliorem, voluntatem vero ipso intellectu nobiliorem esse secundum quid et per accidens. Et si voluntas dicatur domina et regina, ipse intellectus rex est et imperator. Eius enim est dirigere et omnem actum voluntatis in debitum finem ordinare. Insuper et omnem actum voluntatis necesse est aliquem actum intellectus praecedere. Est tamen aliquis actus intellectus qui nullum actum voluntatis praesupponit. In tantum etiam est actus

6 Some Conclusions

As we have seen, Vincenzo advanced a more balanced account of the relation between the intellect and the will in the human soul, and, while arguing for the superiority of the intellect, he discussed also the important role of the will. In some of his proposals he presented a more plausible account of human psychology than Ficino's, whose dialectical accounts are couched in a more rhetorical style, and whose arguments in some cases follow metaphysical considerations as opposed to the quotidian facts of human psychology. Vincenzo's 'Thomism' as presented in his *Opusculum* is very far from the picture of 'the scholastic' which appears in some modern scholarly literature, as mentioned in the first two sections of this chapter.

In a series of profound analyses Guido Alliney has shown convincingly the fruitful philosophical tensions in regard to the status of the will among Franciscan theologians, mainly in the first two decades of the fourteenth century in Paris and Oxford, due to the fact that John Duns Scotus himself held some of the more extreme views on the questions of will and freedom.¹⁶⁵ Many of these theologians struggled to establish a balance between Scotus and the more traditional arguments and doctrinal views of the Scotist school. In these disputes a central place was allotted to the notion of freedom. In other words, the discussion of freedom cannot be separated from a study of the will. This last fact makes it impossible to relate Ficino's proposals on the will, as we have seen in his letter, to this intellectual context, since he does not discuss or even mention the term freedom. What, then, can be said concerning the scholastic background of Ficino's discussion of the will?

Ficino's view seems to reflect the Augustinian and Dionysian arguments presented in medieval authors such as Bonaventure and Henry of Ghent, emphasizing the role of will and love against the intellectualism of Albert and Thomas. Thus, Henry of Ghent's critique of the intellectualism of Thomas on the one hand (his emphasis on the gap between the human and the divine), and his restrained notion of freedom in the human will (a critique of Scotus' notion of human freedom), on the other, suggests that he may have been one of Ficino's more distant scholastic sources. We can also think of "the ontologically grounded unsteadiness of the created will *in via* as well as *in patria*" in

voluntatis rector et melior, quando est rationi rectae magis conformis. In actu ergo intellectus qui imperium et principatum inter potentias animae obtinet, et non in actu voluntatis, quae ab ipso regitur consistit essentialiter ultima foelicitas. Quod in principio me probaturum pollicebar."

165 For references to Alliney's works see Chapter Two, n. 51.

Scotus' theory of the will,¹⁶⁶ as similar to the implied unsteadiness based on *amor* described by Ficino, who does not distinguish between these two states and, criticized by Vincenzo, who demands stability in the relation with God in heaven based on *visio Dei*. But in fact, the relation between Ficino and these medieval sources is quite loose. On the one hand, it is obvious that he does not share the same notion of the will, which he does not relate to freedom but only to love and necessity; his notion of *amor*, on the other hand, is independent of, and goes beyond, the will.¹⁶⁷

On the problem of the relationship between the intellect and the will, and its ancient and medieval provenance, Ficino advanced a solution which moved beyond the traditional and novel scholastic formulations and assumptions. He adds to this doctrinal discussion a new/old (or rather a renewed and rediscovered) element, *amor*, which he presents as an ecstatic, intuitive, and a somewhat mystical element, and which he relates to human experience and moral actions. This notion of *amor* is superior to intellectual inquiry and activity, and its relation to the will is indirect. In fact, while *amor* is a power in the will, and it is clearly constructed in the will as in Henry's account, Ficino presents another notion of *amor* through which we can reach higher ground both in the cosmic hierarchy and within our soul. The emphasis on being good and doing or acting in a good manner, or *facere veritatem* as opposed to the act of seeing (which is usually related to the intellect and truth; thus, *facere veritatem* does not sound very scholastic),¹⁶⁸ is neither the act of the intellect nor of the will. In fact, Ficino relates his discussion of the will to *amor* in order to focus on love, and thus, breaking the dichotomy intellect/will by discussing this new element, he creates a new possibility which is both practical and theoretical. For Ficino, the intellect and the will are not the only active powers in our (rational) soul, but there is also love, which he relates to rational and moral acts, but also to ecstatic experiences which can prepare and lead us higher towards God. I think that Vincenzo was referring to this aspect in Ficino's discussion in his dedication to Lorenzo when he argued: *Verum quoniam ea Marsilii nostri*

166 Alliney, 'The Treatise on the Human Will in the *Collationes oxonienses* Attributed to John Duns Scotus', p. 251.

167 These conclusions are not different from those of Cesare Vasoli, in his detailed discussion of a contemporary Scotist theologian, Giorgio Benigno Salviati and his *Opus septem questionum*, regarding his scholastic treatment of *amor*. See Vasoli, *Filosofia e religione nella cultura del Rinascimento*, pp. 139–182; especially pp. 165–166.

168 Ficino, *Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum*, vol. 4, pp. 26–28: "Qui mentem hominis, quando verum aliquid attingit, non dicit, ut solent alii, videre rem aliquam veram, sed facere veritatem, quia scilicet re ipsa assequitur, ut deus, qui ipsa veritas est, quasi forma eius efficiatur."

determinatio non tantum coelesti theologo Aquinati Thomae, sed et potioris partis coeterorum illustrium doctorum sane sententiae adversatur.

In issues of moral psychology Ficino was not a scholastic. Acknowledging this point, however, should not blind us to the complex relationship of his ideas to those of representatives of late scholasticism such as Vincenzo Bandello.

In the next chapter we shall discuss the theory of the will of one of the most important 'Scotist' thinkers of the late *Quattrocento*: Giorgio Benigno Salviati, whose ideas on evil have already been discussed in Chapter Two.

A Theory of Will, Human Dignity, and Freedom

1 Humanists and Scholastics. Salviati and his Dialogue

In this chapter I shall offer a detailed study of an early work by the Franciscan philosopher and theologian Giorgio Benigno Salviati (c. 1448–1520) on the importance of the will in the human soul.¹ This philosophical issue, which is of course related to an established question in medieval philosophy regarding the two dominant faculties in the human soul—the intellect and the will—and is often regarded as the dispute between the ‘intellectualists’ (usually identified as ‘Thomists’) and the ‘voluntarists’ (usually identified as ‘Scotists’), seems to have acquired a new dimension in the fifteenth century.² Salviati himself has already been a subject of debate among some historians, regarding the question of whether he should be classified as a humanist or as a scholastic thinker.³ Such a debate is already an indication of Salviati’s unique historical position in the intellectual history of Italy in the last three decades of the fifteenth century

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- 1 This early discussion, written in dialogue form during Salviati’s stay in Urbino some time between 1474 and 1482, and entitled *Fridericus, On the Prince of the Soul’s Kingship*, can be found in Šojat, *De voluntate hominis*, pp. 139–219; for a biographical sketch and a list of Salviati’s works see pp. 27–63; a doctrinal study of the dialogue can be found on pp. 69–128. For a more detailed biographical sketch and an intellectual profile, see Vasoli, *Profezia e ragon*, pp. 17–127. See also Vasoli’s *Filosofia e religione*, pp. 139–182, for a detailed account of Salviati’s Scotist commentary on Lorenzo de’ Medici’s sonnet. For another work by Salviati, on future contingents, see the critical edition by Girard J. Etzkorn (ed.), *De arcanis Dei. Card. Bessarion eiusque socii anno 1471 disputantes. card. Franciscus de la Rovere OFM Conv. Joannes Gattus OP, Fernandus de Cordoba et Joannes Foxal OFM Conv. Secretarius: Georgius Benignus Salviati OFM Conv.* (Rome 1997).
 - 2 In the course of this chapter I shall be referring to the dispute concerning the intellect and the will which we have discussed in Chapter Five, between Marsilio Ficino and Lorezo de’ Medici, and to the critical account of Ficino’s part in the dispute by Vincenzo Bandello. For another discussion of the same topic by a young student of Ficino, Alamanno Donati, see Chapter Seven below.
 - 3 See the critical remarks of Carlo Dionisotti against François Secret in ‘Umanisti dimenticati?’, in Giuseppe Billanovich, Augusto Campana, Carlo Dionisotti, and Paolo Sambin (eds.), *Italia medioevale e umanistica IV* (1961) (Padua 1961), pp. 287–321; see e.g., pp. 287–292. We may point out that most of Salviati’s texts have not yet been critically edited, some are still available only in manuscript form, there are hardly any detailed discussions of them, and we do not have as yet a full modern biography of this author.

and in the first two decades of the sixteenth century. I hope that the present discussion will offer a contribution to the study of fifteenth-century scholasticism and to the assessment of the relations between the humanists and the scholastics of that period.

Giorgio Benigno Salviati (or in his original name Juraj Dragišić) was born in Srebrenica in Bosnia in the late 1440s, and joined the conventual Franciscans. After the Turkish conquest in 1463 he moved to Ragusa (Dubrovnik), and then on to Italy, where he studied in the *studia* of his order in Padua, Pavia, and Ferrara, finally residing in Paris and in Oxford. He was trained in scholastic philosophy, and he especially mentions one of his teachers, Joannes Foxoles (1415/6–1475), an English theologian and philosopher in the Scotist tradition.⁴ We then find Salviati in the circle of Cardinal Bessarion in Rome in the early 1470s, at the court of Federico of Montefeltro in Urbino between 1472 and 1482, and in Florence from around 1486 until 1494. Then, after a short period in Ragusa, he returned to Rome in 1500, becoming bishop of Cagli in 1507, and finally archbishop of Nazareth in 1512. He died in Rome in 1520. During his long career, Salviati played a leading role in many theological and philosophical debates (e.g., Bessarion vs. George of Trebizond and the controversy regarding future contingents in Rome, or the debate on evil and the Savonarola affair in Florence, as well as the Reuchlin affair), while teaching theology and philosophy, preaching, and writing many texts.⁵

As already mentioned (see n. 1) Salviati's discussion of the will which we are about to examine was written, like most of his works, in dialogue form. This fact might suggest already a humanistic influence upon our Franciscan friar.⁶ But one should stress that Salviati was by no means unique in choosing this literary form for his speculative treatises. From the second half of the fifteenth century we possess a considerable number of dialogues written by scholastic thinkers. On the other hand, humanist thinkers like Ficino and Pico did not write dialogues. I would contend that this fact reflects not only some influence of the humanists upon the scholastics, but also an internal development in late-scholastic philosophical style. But we need many more detailed accounts

4 On Foxoles see, e.g., Etzkorn, 'John Foxal, O.F.M.: His Life and Writings' (with further references); Di Fonzo, 'Il minorita inglese Giovanni Foxholes. Maestro scotista e arcivescovo (ca. 1415–1475)'.

5 Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione*, e.g., pp. 21–28, 35–39, 57, 83–85, 100, 109, 117–120, with further references. For the debate on evil see Chapter Two in this volume.

6 This point was already emphasized by Dionisotti in his 'Umanisti dimenticati?' pp. 301–303, 314–315.

of such texts and their contexts before we can reach more general conclusions about this stylistic development.⁷

Salviati's dialogue *Fridericus, On the Prince of the Soul's Kingship* was written during his sojourn at Urbino, and it is dedicated to Guidubaldo, son of Federico, duke of Urbino.⁸ The two interlocutors in the dialogue are Fridericus, who represents Salviati's own account of the superiority of the will, and his close friend Octavianus (Ottaviano Ubaldini), who argues for the superiority of the intellect. After a short proem, each of the participants in the dialogue presents his general thesis (chapters 1–2), then Octavianus presents more detailed arguments for the superiority of the intellect (chapters 3–7), and Fridericus then presents his case for the superiority of the will and its importance for ethics and theology (chapters 8–21). The final part (chapters 22–24) contains a refutation of Octavianus' arguments. Let us now present a more detailed account of the dialogue and its philosophical context.

7 Some examples are Antonio degli Agli's *De mystica statera*, a dialogue between himself and Ficino, who was his student, in which "Antonius exhorts Fecinus to remember that Christian studies are to be placed before pagan studies", a text which still remains in manuscript: MS Naples BN VIII. F. 9, ff. 19–33; see Celenza, *Piety and Pythagoras in Renaissance Florence*, p. 27 and nn. 99 and 100 there. Another professional theologian who was one of Ficino's early teachers, Lorenzo Pisano, wrote three dialogues, probably between the late 1450s and the early 1460s, entitled: *Dialogi humilitatis*, *De amore*, and *Dialogi quinque*, which are still in manuscripts; see Field, *The Origins of the Platonic Academy of Florence*, pp. 158–174, see especially p. 162, and pp. 277–279. (*De amore* stands at the centre of Chapter Eight below). Another example is Francesco di Tommaso, a Dominican of Santa Maria Novella, who in 1480 wrote a dialogue *De negocio logico*, which he dedicated to Poliziano, and in which he attempted to explain the problem of universals as presented in Prophyry's *Isagoge*. See Jonathan Hunt, *Politian and Scholastic Logic: An Unknown Dialogue by a Dominican Friar* (Città di Castello 1995). I am now preparing an *editio princeps* of yet another dialogue by a Dominican theologian, the *Liber dierum lucensium* (1461/2) by Giovanni Caroli. On the revival of the Ciceronian dialogue in the Renaissance see David Marsh, *The Quattrocento Dialogue: Classical Tradition and Humanist Innovation* (Cambridge MA 1980); see also Virginia Cox, *The Renaissance Dialogue: Literary Dialogue in its Social and Political Contexts, Castiglione to Galileo* (Cambridge 1992). But this revival of the dialogue form by professional scholastic theologians in the last decades of the fifteenth century still needs to be studied properly.

8 Salviati, *Fridericus*, p. 139: "Georgii Benigni, Ordinis Minorum, sacrae theologiae professoris, in *Fridericum, De animae regni principe*, ad optimae indolis maximaeque spei puerum dominum Guidonem Ubaldum, comitem, prooemium incipit feliciter." Some general details on this text can be found in Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione*, pp. 35–39.

2 Salviati's Theory of the Will

As we have seen in Chapter Five, in Ficino's dispute with Lorenzo de' Medici and Vincenzo Bandello regarding the will and the intellect, which was held in 1474, both the term and the notion of *libertas* are missing, and his emphasis is on *amor* and on being or becoming good through the power of the will in contrast to merely knowing what is good through the power of the intellect. Salviati's discussion also contains some similar arguments regarding the role of *amor* and the function of the will.⁹ But, as we shall see in the present discussion, in contrast to Ficino, Salviati emphasizes *libertas* as the quality of the human will *per se*, and his discussion of *libertas* anticipates his discussion of *liberum arbitrium*, in which we find the standard distinction between *arbitrium rationis* and *arbitrium voluntatis*. Only the latter is related to *libertas* through the will. At first sight, what we have here is a richer philosophical account than Ficino's letter on the human will and its importance to human life, to ethics and to theology, in which both Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus, as well as Aristotle (among other ancient and medieval thinkers) are used as authorities.

In chapter 12, entitled: *quod homo magis distet a beluis voluntate quam intellectu voluntasque ea ratione sit praestantior*, Salviati states that the will is what gives preeminence in nature to man. The will is contrasted to nature, to the senses and to the intellect; it is a dominant, active, and ruling element which is free. The intellect, on the other hand, is not peculiar to man:

Since every living being understands, and understanding, in turn, is the genus of reason and sense-perception; therefore, the intellect falls [i.e., as a species] under the same genus as the sense; since all these are defined as 'apprehensive powers' and they are all natural principles. But only the

9 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 205: "...quemadmodum deterius est odisse Deum quam ignorare, sic melius amare quam nosse"; p. 206: "...et sicut non qui videt bonum, sed qui vult fit bonus, sic animus non ex eo quod Deum considerat, sed ex eo quod amat fit divinus, quemadmodum materia non quia lucem ab igne capiat, sed quia calorem, ignis evadit"; p. 207: "Quod cum multo plures amare Deum ardentem possint quam clare cognoscere, amatoria via et hominibus tutior est, et ad infinitum bonum, quod se ipsum vult quam plurimis impertire, longe accomodatior: ad voluntatem igitur pertinet consecutio." Compare Salviati, *Fridericus*, p. 167: "Actus vero voluntatis est amor sive odium; at veluti voluntas non intelligit, ita nec intellectus amat: si enim non essent actus distincti, neque potentiae distinguerentur; sed distinctae sunt potentiae; neque igitur intellectus amorem, neque voluntas intellectionem producet"; p. 169: "...quia veluti scire ita et iudicare bonum non facit nos esse bonos, sed id acceptare et velle."

will differs from them as to their common genus, and only the will is separated from, and opposed to them, and is called active by its own intention, that is, free.

... but only the will is by itself free, reason is no more than vision; and thus man, while acting through his intellect, just like acting through his sense, is acting according to nature. Only by his will, as being a free agent, man is chiefly distinguished from beasts. But the more man is distinct from beasts, the more he is a man; therefore, this thing will be more noble, through which he is most removed from the baser things. And thus the will, when man would be seen at his most human, should be regarded as the most excellent element in man.¹⁰

Salviati, the prominent Franciscan theologian and philosopher, the spiritual heir of Cardinal Bessarion, who later played such a leading role in Lorenzo de' Medici's circle in Florence, is making here his own important contribution to fifteenth-century discussions of the dignity of man, a theme which is usually related to the humanist movement.¹¹ Salviati is thus rejecting the

10 Salviati, *Fridericus*, p. 173: "Omne enim animal cognoscit, cognitio quoque genus est ad rationis sensusque notitiam; intellectus igitur cum sensu sub eodem genere cadit. Vocantur enim omnes 'potentiae apprehensivae', suntque cunctae naturales causae. At sola voluntas ab eis quovis eis communi genere differt, solaque e contra dividitur, vocaturque agens a proposito sive liberum"; "...sola vero voluntas ex se libera est, ratio non magis quam visus; homo itaque per intellectum agit natura, sicut et per sensum. Sola voluntate, tamquam libero agente, a beluis potissime distat; quo vero magis distat, eo magis est homo; magis igitur id erit nobile, quo maxime a vilioribus removetur. Voluntas itaque cum maxime homo videatur, 'praestabilissimum quid' in homine sit fatendum est." On this see also the general remarks of Vasoli in his *Profezia e ragione*, p. 36.

11 While dealing with a historical figure like Salviati, one cannot use too strict or schematic definitions of humanism or scholasticism (on this issue see e.g., the remarks and references in the introduction, n. 7, as well as Dionisotti's remarks referred to in n. 3 above). For one such too strict and very influential approach to the humanist movement, see Ronald G. Witt, 'The Humanism of Paul Oskar Kristeller', in Monfasani (ed.), *Kristeller Reconsidered. Essays on his Life and Scholarship* (New York 2006), pp. 257–267; see especially pp. 258–259. Rather, we need a more flexible and dynamic notion, in which also the Franciscan friar who was so active in the intellectual and religious life in Rome and Florence, for instance, and had close relations with prominent figures of the time in both cardinal Bessarion's circle (Fernando di Córdoba, Giovanni Gatti, Cardinal and future Pope Francesco della Rovere, and Salviati's teacher John Foxoles) and in Lorenzo de' Medici's circle (Ficino and Pico among many other humanists and scholastics), could be adequately studied. Though he was 'only' a theologian and a philosopher who studied in Paris and Oxford, and not strictly a philologist, his social and intellectual involvement

idea formulated in Aristotle's *Politics* 1253a9–10: λόγον δὲ μόνον ἄνθρωπος ἔχει τῶν ζώων, which became so central among the later ancient and medieval Greek, Latin, and Arab interpreters, and was so dominant in many contexts of scholastic philosophy. He also rejects Augustine's notion of *rationalis anima* as what gives preeminence in nature to man.¹² While his solution is quite different from Ficino's, who, in his *De Christiana religione* of 1474, regarded religion as most characteristic of man and of human society and culture, it is in a way closer to Pico's famous treatment of this theme in the opening lines of his oration of 1486, later entitled *De hominis dignitate*, in which man received from God the possibility to choose his own fate and way of life.¹³ But Salviati,

placed him inside the humanist milieu. It is enough to mention here his defense of Pico or Reuchlin, but also of Savonarola, in order to show the historical complexity we have to deal with. My point is not that we should turn Salviati into a humanist, but rather that we should use more sensitive historical terms through which we would be able to follow him through the different historical contexts in which he was active.

- 12 Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana* I, XXII, 20: "Magna enim quaedam res est homo, *factus ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei*, non in quantum mortali corpore includitur, sed in quantum bestias rationalis animae honore praecedit."
- 13 For Ficino's notion of the importance of religion in human life, see his *De Christiana religione*, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 1, p. 2. Ficino's critique of previous answers to the question of the preeminence of mankind in nature, as well as his own solution, are repeated and discussed also in book XIV, chapter 9, of his *Platonic Theology*. See *Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum*, vol. 4, pp. 290–298. See especially pp. 292–296. See also Hankins' discussion in his 'Religion and the Modernity of Renaissance Humanism', in Angelo Mazzocco (ed.), *Interpretations of Renaissance Humanism* (Leiden 2006), pp. 137–153; especially pp. 147–148. For Pico's notion see Garin (ed.), *De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno e scritti vari*, pp. 104–106. Pico's *Oration* was reedited by Francesco Bausi (ed.), *Discorso sulla dignità dell'uomo* (Parma 2003); the relevant passage can be found on pp. 6–10. It should be noted that Pico does not use *voluntas* or *libertas* here, which are central terms in Salviati's discussion, but only *arbitrium* and *arbitrarius*. On the other hand, we may have an echo of a common biblical source for both Pico and Salviati, cited only by the Franciscan; see: *Fridericus*, pp. 169–170: "Atque hoc est id quod Eccli. 15 dicit: *Ab initio fecit Deus hominem et dimisit eum in manu consilii sui*, id est dimisit ei potestatem et libertatem sequi aut fugere consilium sive rationis arbitrium. Unde et subdit: *Apposui tibi aquam et ignem*, hoc est varias rationes contrariasque; *ad quod volueris, oppone manum tuam*, hoc est quam tibi placet, sponte sequaris sententiam." The biblical verses from Ecclesiasticus 15, 14–17 receive here an interpretation according to Salviati's own philosophical terminology, just like the citation from Aristotle in n. 18 below. We find also in Pico the expression *in cuius manu te posui*. On the theme of human dignity (though with a different interpretation of both Ficino and Pico) see the general discussion in Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and its Sources*, pp. 169–181. It is symptomatic of Kristeller's approach that he mentions on p. 171 the facts that the earliest humanist

on the one hand, presents a fuller account based on the notions of human will and freedom as developed in scholastic philosophy up to his own day. On the other hand, his method is to reconcile different, and sometimes opposed opinions, showing their concord, again, in a similar way to both Ficino and Pico, as well as to other humanists.¹⁴ Thus, Salviati does not explicitly reject Aristotle, Augustine, or any other authority. He just presents an interpretation of Aristotle, for instance, in which he is already using his own notions of will and freedom, which are themselves the product of the latest developments (a point to which we shall return) in scholastic thinking, but quite different from Aristotle's.¹⁵ This is of course the standard way, in scholastic philosophy, of presenting new ideas. If some thinker somehow manages to relate his new

treatment of the dignity of man by Bartolomeo Facio was encouraged by a Benedictine monk, Antonio da Barga, and that this subject is treated by him "in a strongly religious and theological context", but that he does not deal at all with the contributions of the scholastic philosophers to this theme in the fifteenth century. A more detailed discussion of this theme, with a yet different approach, in which the scholastic tradition is better appreciated, can be found in Trinkaus, *In Our Image and Likeness—Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought*, vol. 1, pp. 179–321.

- 14 For Salviati's method see *Fridericus*, p. 157: "At veritati (id nosti) veritas—veluti nec bono bonum—opponitur numquam." See also the citations in Šojat's introduction, *Fridericus* p. 35, n. 56, from Salviati's *Opus de natura caelestium spirituum quos angelos vocamus*: "Mihi certo Thomas non minus carus Scoto. Uterque enim praestans, uterque doctus, uterque sacrae fidei validus propugnator. Ubi convaluerō conciliare, id facere enitar"; and from his *Propheticae solutiones pro Hieronymo Savonarola*: "Verum est... illum modum a supra dicto doctore [Scoto] multifariam impugnari; forsā tamen posset conciliari Thomas et Scotus vel eo in loco, sed haec praetereunda in praesenti iudico." See also Šojat's remarks on p. 65. On this same issue see also Vasoli's remarks in his *Profezia e ragione*, e.g., pp. 34, 41–42. This method is very close to Pico's method in his famous *Conclusiones* of 1486. See Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones*, ed. Bohdan Kieszkowski (Genève 1973), p. 54: "Conclusiones paradoxe numero XVII secundum propriam opinionem, dicta primum Aristotelis et Platonis, deinde aliorum doctorum conciliantes, qui maxime discordare videntur." For Salviati's use of the same principle in another context, in his commentary on Lorenzo de' Medici's poem, see Vasoli, *Filosofia e religione*, pp. 164–165. On this issue see also Frederick Purnell, Jr., 'The Theme of Philosophic Concord and the Sources of Ficino's Platonism', in Gian Carlo Garfagnini (ed.), *Marsilio Ficino e il ritorno di Platone: studi e documenti*, 2 vols. (Florence 1986), vol. 2, pp. 397–415.
- 15 See, e.g., *Fridericus*, p. 174: "Mentem Philosophus totam in intellectivam animam vocat, cuius hae sunt duae potentiae: voluntas et ratio. Unde quia mens pro ratione saepissime capitur, se non ita capere ostendit X libro, iniquens: 'Quodsi felicitas operatio est profluens per virtutem, consentaneum est rationi ut sit ea operatio quae per optimam profiscitur; hoc autem eius erit profecto quod est praestabilissimum atque optimum,—sive igitur mens sit hoc, sive aliquid aliud quod quidem natura dominari videtur ac imperare'.

notion of the human will and freedom, say, to Aristotle, then this is how this new notion should be presented. But as we shall see, through the dramatic dynamic of the dialogue, Salviati managed also to preserve the sense of novelty regarding the theory he presents.

Salviati, then, emphasizes the essential relation between *voluntas* and *libertas*, as contrasted to *natura* and *ratio* which are not free. But he is not willing to neglect the importance of reason or of rational proceedings, as can be found for instance in Ficino's letter cited in n. 9 above. He rather prefers a broader definition of the rational soul, presented as an interpretation of Aristotle's notion of *anima rationalis* but which in fact includes his new conception of the will, and which could have helped him also in reconciling his own ideas regarding the human will and freedom with Augustine's:

But Aristotle uses [the terms] rational or intellectual power in discussing the whole part of the soul, that which is described as 'rational'. But only the rational soul is free, yet not by dint of its reason, but by dint of its will. Hence he often uses [the expression] 'free agent' or 'intentional' in the same sense. But intention is firm volition of something.¹⁶

Here we have another kind of rationality, stemming from a wider conception of the rational soul, which is free and contains both reason and will. Now we are ready for Salviati's account of *ratio*, *voluntas*, *libertas*, and *arbitrium*.

According to the Franciscan, reason, as well as all senses and powers in the human soul which participate in reason, can be described as free only through participation (*per participationem*), whereas the will is the only power which is by itself (*ex sese*) free.¹⁷ But what does freedom mean here? It is mastery, or

At voluntas est illa quae praecipit, naturaue dominatur; indistincte itaque et absque delectu utramque potentiam 'mentis' vocabulo comprehendit."

16 *Ibid.*, pp. 165–166: "Aristoteles autem rationalem potentiam sive intellectivam pro tota illa anima quae 'rationalis' dicitur capit. Anima vero rationalis sola libera est, non tamen ratione, sed voluntate. Unde agens liberum sive a proposito pro eodem saepenumero accipit. Propositum autem est firma alicuius rei volitio."

17 *Ibid.*, p. 168: "Ratio quoque et omnes sensus viresque, rationis participes, liberi per participationem dici possunt, at sola voluntas ex sese ut talis sit oportet." This is a standard Scotist position: "Potentia libera per participationem, quae subest libertati voluntatis, non magis determinatur secundum actum suum circa minimum obiectum quam maximum, ut patet de visu, quod non magis determinatur ad videndum solem quam aliud visibile; igitur multo fortius voluntas, quae libera est per essentiam, non magis determinabitur ad volendum unum quam aliud." This citation from Scotus' first commentary on the Sentences (*Lectura prima*, d. 1 p. 2 q. 2, n. 99) is quoted and discussed in Alliney, 'La

the ability to control or perform its own acts. Only the will is the ruler of this kingdom in our soul; all the other powers should be regarded only as hand-maids or followers of this ruler.¹⁸ Salviati now presents an argument showing that there is no disagreement with Thomas here, since no one, including the Angelic Doctor himself, would ever ask whether reason can be compelled to act in this or that manner, but only whether the will can be thus compelled. Thus, compulsion is related by everyone to reason, while acting contingently (*contingenter*) is the way of the will. Without this distinction, Salviati argues, how can some Doctors discuss the problem of whether someone can necessarily will the supreme good? In such discussions the assumption is always that freedom and the will are strongly related. All this proves, Salviati concludes, that if we have freedom in us, it consists in the will. Hence, if someone declares that our will is not free, this goes against reason, experience and our faith.¹⁹ It is important to notice that Salviati first constitutes the relation between freedom and the will, defining each of these elements in the human soul, and distinguishing them from all the other natural and thus necessary elements such as reason and the senses. Only then does he discuss another related term: *arbitrium*.

The discussion of *arbitrium* begins with a question raised by Octavianus, one of the two interlocutors in the dialogue, who, as mentioned above, tried in the first chapters²⁰ to persuade Fridericus, the second interlocutor who represents Salviati's own views, that the intellect is the most noble power in

contingenza della fruizione beatifica nello sviluppo del pensiero di Duns Scoto', p. 636 and n. 13 there. A discussion of the rational will in Scotus can be found in Mary Beth Ingham, 'The Birth of the Rational Will: Duns Scotus and the *Quaestiones super libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis*, Book IX, *Quaestio* 15', in *Medioevo XXX* (2005), pp. 139–170.

18 *Ibid.*: "Cum autem libertas nil aliud sit quam ad suum actum eliciendum aut producendum (per idque ceteras potentias ad operationes suas reducendum) dominium sive potestas, voluntas certo sola huius regni nostri domina erit, reliquae potentiae pedissequae putabuntur."

19 *Ibid.*: "Neque (ultra dictas rationes) longe ab haeresi est dicere voluntatem non esse per se liberam. Ad quid quoque neque sanctus Thomas, neque ullus alius quaesivit umquam 'an ratio compelli potest', sed 'an voluntas', dicuntque omnes eam solam contingenter ferri ad omnia obiecta, neque dissentit in hoc ullus, praeterquam de summo bono, quod quidam dicunt ut necessario velit? Haec sunt signa quod si qua in nobis libertas est, ea sit in voluntate. Unde rationibus, experimento, fideique nostra repugnat si quis voluntatem nostram non esse liberam dicat." For the sources at the background of Salviati's argument here, such as Thomas Aquinas as well as Henry of Ghent, Giles of Rome or Peter John Olivi, see Šojat's references and citations on pp. 168–169.

20 *Ibid.*, pp. 144–156.

the human soul. Consistent with his line of thought, though admitting that he must accept Fridericus' arguments, Octavianus says:

I am now forced to accept these [arguments]. But why do we sometimes say that we have free judgment, when to give judgment, just like to have an opinion or to judge, would be an act of reason?²¹

A good question, originating in the distinction between reason and will, as well as in the common use of *liberum arbitrium* as free will. Octavianus is willing to accept the phrase *voluntas libera*, but in the light of the previous arguments and distinctions the phrase *liberum arbitrium* seems now misleading. Here Fridericus/Salviati has recourse to the other kind of rationality we discussed earlier:

Human judgment [*iudicium sive arbitrium*] is free both while preceding the will and while following it: for, while we have this determination by the intellect 'this thing is indeed better, but that is worse', the will is still free to pursue what is worse, and also not to will what is better, or certainly to take an indifferent position. Whence Ovid represented this Medea in book six of his *Metamorphoses* as thus saying: 'I see and approve the better things, / [but] I follow the worse things'. Certainly a most clear and true sentence! And so free is our judgment, because, just as to know, so also to judge what is good does not make us good, but only accepting and willing it. And so free judgment is the free election or acceptance of judgment.²²

21 *Ibid.*, p. 169: "Compellor his iam adhaerere. Sed cur dicimus interdum arbitrium nos habere liberum, cum arbitrari, sicut et opinari aut iudicare, sit rationis actus?"

22 *Ibid.*: "Humanum iudicium sive arbitrium liberum est ut praecedat voluntatem et ut sequitur eandem: data enim ab intellectu sententia 'hoc quidem esse melius, id vero deterius', voluntas libera est ad prosequendum deterius, atque ad non volendum melius, aut certo ad standum indifferenter. Unde Medeam illam VI [this reference is corrected by Šojat: it should be to book VII, 20–21] libro *Metamorphoseos* Ovidius introducit sic dicentem: 'Video meliora proboque, / deteriora sequor'. Praeclara certo veraque sententia! Liberum itaque est nostrum arbitrium, quia veluti scire ita et iudicare bonum non facit nos esse bonos, sed id acceptare et velle [Šojat provides here a reference to Scotus]. Liberum itaque arbitrium est libera iudicii electio sive acceptatio." For the *fortuna* of this example of Medea as a case of *akrasia* in the later tradition, starting with Lefèvre d'Étaples, see Risto Saarinen, 'Weakness of Will in Renaissance and Reformation', in Hoffmann, Müller and Perkams (eds.), *The Problem of Weakness of Will in Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 329–351; especially pp. 334–347, 350–351. But as we can see here, we find the example of Medea

Only when free election or acceptance are involved can we speak of free judgment. And this, as we have seen, is peculiar to man. Salviati emphasizes the fact that he discusses here the human judgment. We are beyond the dichotomy rational/irrational through the new notions of freedom and will in the human soul, which presents a more complex picture of human psychology. But this complexity gives us a better account of most human actions in reality, and it bears also some important ethical and theological implications. The possibility of deliberately choosing to commit an evil deed or a sin given by our free and post-lapsarian will is exactly what gives us as human beings the possibility of becoming good and, as Christians, of being saved. Another implication is that in fact there are two kinds of judgments: one of the reason (*arbitrium rationis*) and one of the will (*arbitrium voluntatis*). This observation is of course not new. But human judgment, as we have seen in Salviati's arguments, derives only from the will and thus is free. Salviati is using the biblical verses of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 15, 14–17, to show that man can escape the judgment of reason and thus act freely. In fact, man received this ability from God Himself.²³ When we consider, for instance, Thomas' view of *arbitrium rationis* we see a wholly different psychology, in which, so it seems, the Aristotelian notions of *homo*

already earlier than Lefèvre d'Étaples, in Salviati's scholastic discussion of the will. Thus, against Saarinen's general conclusions on p. 337, for instance, we can say that the scholastic thinkers were less restrictive in their illustrations, and that neither Lefèvre d'Étaples nor Josse Clichtove "have been the first commentators to have employed this example". Fifteenth-century scholasticism and its dialectical relations with, and mutual influence on, the humanist movement are still a task for further studies based on unstudied works such as Salviati's. In any case this theme is known in Renaissance poetry at least since the days of Petrarca; see *Canzoniere* cclxiv: "e veggio 'l meglio et al peggior m'appiglio". This is the last line in this poem, which makes it powerful, notable and quite easy to remember. See also the attitude towards classical poetry, directed against the 'scola vulgaris', as reflected in Niccolò Tignosi; see *Nicolai Tignosi Fulginatis ad Cosmam Medicem in illos qui mea in Aristotelis comentaria criminantur opusculum*, in Sensi, 'Niccolò Tignosi da Foligno. L'opera e il pensiero', p. 473: "Eumque plurimum laudant, qui iuxta maternum sermonem ac poene vulgarem sua dicta contexuit, ut quilibet, quantumcumque sciulus, possit facilius enucleare sententiam; omnes etiam reiiciendos asserunt, qui vel ornate dixerint, aut vocabulis pene vulgaribus non utuntur. Persium non legendum, sed cremandum predicant. Oratium, Iuvenalem tamquam nullius utilitatis homines abiiciendos. Lucium non modo amplectendum, sed penitus deperdendum et multos alios de medio removendos, quod loquantur altius, gravius, maioriq[ue] ornatu, quam scola vulgaris expetere videatur; et sic sententie clauduntur obscuriores." On Tignosi see also Chapter Eight, n. 8 below.

23 I have already quoted this passage from *Fridericus*, pp. 169–170 in n. 13 above.

rationalis and *prudencia* are still strongly reflected.²⁴ Thomas' declaration that *homo est dominus suorum actuum per arbitrium rationis* is totally opposed to Salviati's view.²⁵ But during the two hundred years between Thomas' death in 1274 and the activity of Salviati, a whole new psychology had emerged in scholastic philosophy, and this new psychology is clearly reflected in Salviati's discussion of the human will written during the 1470s.²⁶ Two points in this new psychology are essential for our present discussion: first, the human will is not bound by any necessity to achieve the supreme good, or even to aim at it, and this is an expression of its freedom (as opposed to natural and thus necessary causes), through which man can also turn himself away from the supreme good; and second, man's primary condition, through which he can turn himself towards the supreme good, is determined only by his free will.

This second point implied some restriction on the late Augustine's severe notion of grace in the post-lapsarian state. Both points reflect different notions of human rationality than what we had in Thomas. Someone like Henry of Ghent, though still maintaining necessity in the act of the will towards the final end, is extremely important in developing these new emphases.²⁷ Thinkers like Peter John Olivi and Gonsalvus of Spain in Paris seem to have exercised some influence upon the philosophical formation of the best-known thinker related to this later development in scholasticism: John Duns Scotus.²⁸ While

24 See, e.g., Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 2a2ae, q. 47, a. 12: "Sed quia quilibet homo, in quantum est rationis, participat aliquid de regimine secundum arbitrium rationis, in tantum convenit ei prudentiam habere."

25 *Ibid.*, q. 158, a. 2: "Ad tertium dicendum quod homo est dominus suorum actuum per arbitrium rationis; et ideo motus qui praeveniunt iudicium rationis non sunt in potestate hominis in generali, ut scilicet nullus eorum insurgat; quamvis ratio possit quemlibet singulariter impedire, si insurgat."

26 For detailed discussions of this new psychology in scholastic philosophy during the later part of the thirteenth century and the first decades of the fourteenth century, see, e.g., the studies of Guido Alliney cited in Chapter Two, n. 51.

27 Alliney, 'La contingenza della fruizione beatifica', p. 634. See also C. G. Normore, 'Picking and Choosing: Anselm and Ockham on Choice', in *Vivarium* XXXVI (1998), pp. 23–39; see especially pp. 31–33.

28 Alliney, 'Fra Scoto e Ockham: Giovanni di Reading e il dibattito sulla libertà a Oxford (1310–1320)', pp. 251–253. Scotus' theory of the will is much more complicated than what is provided in the present chapter, but it is beyond the scope of this discussion, which is focused on Salviati and the fifteenth-century context. Scotus distinguishes between liberty and nature and between contingent and necessary activity: each power can act either according to nature or according to liberty. All powers except the will are natural and thus necessary and not free. The will is a free power which acts contingently. It is impossible, according to Scotus, that the same power will act in a different way while being *in via* or *in*

the first generation of Scotists in the early fourteenth century tried to reconcile the more extreme position of Scotus himself (regarding the possibility of using free will and turning away from God also *in patria*) with the more traditional doctrinal view (thus maintaining some kind of necessity *in patria* in order not to offend God's perfection and the perfect happiness of the beatific vision), it will be interesting to see what Salviati's view on this issue is. As we have seen, he seems to accept Scotus' position *in via*.²⁹ Since we do not have yet enough detailed studies of fifteenth-century scholasticism and Scotism, we must restrict our general observations.³⁰ Let us now return to Salviati's discussion, bearing in mind this general orientation.

As we have seen in the case of *arbitrium*, where the phrase *arbitrium liberum* seemed at first sight misleading, and a new definition was required in the light of the other distinctions, Salviati is using the same method also in his discussion of *appetitus* in chapter 13. While presenting Thomas' view of *appetitus* and *voluntas* he argues that there is a confusion in this discussion between *appetitus naturalis* and *voluntas*. It is right to relate the natural appetite to the intellect, and to describe this activity as necessary, but it is wrong to identify every appetite with the will. Salviati seems to be concerned about this

patria. Thus, the will acts freely and contingently also *in patria* towards the supreme good and beatitude, and can 'not will' it. But this 'not willing' *in patria* does not imply any evil or any offence towards the perfection of the supreme good. See: Alliney, 'La contingenza della fruizione beatifica nello sviluppo del pensiero di Duns Scoto', p. 639.

29 On these tensions among Scotist thinkers in the early fourteenth century see Alliney, 'La ricezione della teoria scotiana della volontà nell'ambiente teologico parigino (1307–1316)', pp. 371–372. Compare Salutati, *De fato et fortuna*, p. 61: "Eadem autem est ratio voluntatis, que quidem rationalis affectus et appetitus est intellectus humani, quam sic fecit Deus liberum, quod nichil preter finem ultimum, qui vera beatitudo est, possit de per se nisi libere velle"; p. 70: "Ut cum hoc, me scilicet de fato scribere, sit contingens et a libera voluntate consideratum in se, quia tamen hoc visum infallibiliter ab eterno est dispositum et ordinatum et ille voluit cuius voluntati nil resistit, si referatur ad primam causam, necessarium est, in se vero taliter contingens quod necessario sit contingens."

30 Yet one should mention here, for instance, Hoenen's 'Scotus and Scotist School. The Tradition of Scotist Thought in the Medieval and Early Modern Period'. With regard to fifteenth-century debates held in Cologne between the Albertists and Thomists, mainly on logic, see Hoenen's 'Late Medieval Schools of Thought in the Mirror of University Textbooks. The *Promptuarium Argumentorum* (Cologne 1492)'; in Maarten J. F. M. Hoenen, J. H. Josef Schneider, Georg Wieland (eds.), *Philosophy and Learning. Universities in the Middle Ages* (Leiden 1995), pp. 329–369. With regard to one of the central figures in fifteenth-century scholasticism, see Monfasani, *Fernando of Cordova: A Biographical and Intellectual Profile*. With regard to a more minor figure see Monfasani's 'Giovanni Gatti of Messina: A Profile and an Unedited Text'.

obscurity and about the confusion inherent in the common way of using these terms.³¹ Thus, for instance, we find in the 1474 dispute between Ficino and Bandello (discussed in Chapter Five) a rational appetite which is related to the intellect, and a sensual appetite which is related to the will. Since Ficino is not relating his notion of the will to freedom, and certainly not contrasting it with nature or with natural and necessary causes (such as the senses, for instance) he is left with a diminished notion of the will, which is ruled by an irrational and sensual appetite, and thus he is justly criticized by his Dominican rival, who was only interested in restoring the preeminence of the intellect in the human soul.³² This might be an example of what would have been regarded by Salviati as a confused contemporary discussion of the appetite, the intellect, and the will.

Against this confusion Salviati immediately distinguishes between his notion of the will which is a free power and opposed to nature, and that kind of natural appetite.³³ As we have seen already, Salviati has no difficulty in

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- 31 Salviati, *Fridericus*, p. 175: "Hoc appetitu [appetitu naturali], omnem perfectionem intellectui possibilem, similiter et voluntati, expetimus; eo ipso anima tamquam suo perfectibili semper uniri corpori cupit; isto appetitu—Paulus dicebat—*nolumus expoliari, sed supervestiri*; hoc appetitu necessario ferimur, ducimur, agimur; hic est ille de quo sanctus Thomas ait: Voluntas ut natura necessario fertur in ultimum finem, sive in summum bonum. Vocat enim communi modo omnem appetitum 'voluntatem': sunt enim in vulgo ambigua haec nomina, involuta atque confusa." Šojat gives, in his footnotes on pp. 175–176 the relevant references and citations from II Cor 5, 4, as well as from Thomas' *Summa theologiae* (1a, q. 41, a. 2; q. 60, a. 2; q. 82, a. 1) and *De malo* (q. 6), against Scotus' discussion in the *Ordinatio* (IV, d. 49, q. 10, n. 2–3).
- 32 Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 249: "Non est autem existimandum simpliciter aliquid tale secundum ordinem appetitus sensitivi sed magis secundum ordinem appetitus intellectivi"; p. 264: "Nam ut is asserit, si deus intellectum a voluntate seiungeret, esset intellectus forma quaedam rationalis, voluntas vero esset appetitus cognitione carens. Quis enim dubitat formam rationalem omnem appetitum cognitione carentem dignitate praecedere?" These critical remarks should be referred to Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 208: "Appetitus nullus rem imaginariam querit, sed substantialem, alioquin sufficeret appetenti absentis boni memoria atque imaginatio; visio autem Dei in nobis imaginaria res est et, ut supra dixi, finita. Quocirca voluntatis actus, qui est in Deum infinitum conversio substantialisque diffusio, rationem infinitatis magis habet quam actus intelligendi, qui est Dei notio quaedam pro mentis capacitate." This citations are discussed in detail in Chapter Five, nn. 104–105 and context.
- 33 Salviati, *Fridericus*, p. 176: "Ast nostra haec voluntas, de qua disputamus, nulla in conditione cum appetitu dicto convenit: neque enim est naturalis potentia, neque inclinatio quaedam (nisi forsan, mediante actu quem libere elicit, imperando et iubendo inclinet); estque quo desideramus frequenter opposita illi appetitui."

putting into the mouth of his sources his own notion of the will. Thus Paul himself, according to our Franciscan friar, spoke about the free will and not about the natural appetite when he said: I long to be dissolved and to be with Christ.³⁴ The most important element here is election (*electio*) which receives both theological and ethical dimensions through the examples of the martyrs and brave moral men (*virī fortes*). The will is defined here as a power (*vis*) in the soul created by God for us, through which we become free and masters of our own actions. All other things lack this unique power, and because of this they are not free.³⁵ We should not use *appetere* for *velle*, since it describes that power through which we are necessarily led, and is in itself an innate or natural inclination, nor should we use *appetere* for any operation of the will.³⁶ Salviati presents a typical scholastic concern for accuracy in the use of terms: while *desiderare* and *cupere* can be related to the will, *appetere* should only be related to that inclination through which someone is seeking that thing which has been perfected for him by nature.³⁷ His critique here of most learned men (*doctissimi viri*) should remind us of the intellectual context in which Salviati was active: fifteenth-century Italy, where humanists and scholastics shared a common interest in philosophical and theological questions. Such a common interest may produce also some inaccuracies in the use of terms.³⁸ Salviati's

34 *Ibid.*: "Voluntate enim libera, non appetitu naturali, dicebat Paulus: *Cupio dissolvi et esse cum Christo*." Šojat gives the source in his notes: Philippians 1, 23.

35 *Ibid.*: "Et ut brevi congeram plurima, hac fit omnis electio: hac enim martyres illi subdebant se doloribus et neci, hac viri fortes adsciscunt sibi potius mortem quam turpem gerere vitam. Unde voluntas nil aliud est quam vis quaedam animae, a Deo in nobis creatae, qua liberi operationumque nostrarum domini sumus. At ceterae res, veluti nec libertatem, sic ne hanc quidem, qua quisque liber est, habent potentiam; neque itaque voluntatem."

36 *Ibid.*: "Unde quae volumus, non proprie appetere dici debemus, cum appetere vim quandam—qua ducimur—necessario designet, sitque ea ipsa inclinatio innata, neque ulla eius operatio." As we have seen in Chapter Five, n. 83 and context, a completely different approach, in which the appetite is related to freedom and will, in a Neoplatonic framework in which an eternal will is described as some kind of cosmic law, can be found in Ficino's *Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum*, vol. 1, p. 296.

37 *Ibid.*: "Sed doctissimi viri, vulgo consentientes, velle beluas et reliquas res insensibiles saepe dicunt,—similiter et hominem voluntate appetere. Sed homo desiderare vel forsan cupere quoque voluntate dici potest; appetere solum illa inclinatione qua petit id quod sibi est natura perfectum, dicendus est (veluti grave centrum, leve circumferentiam)."

38 We may think of Coluccio Salutati's discussion of the superiority of the will to the intellect in his famous and influential composition *De nobilitate legum et medicinae*, ed. Peter Michael Schenkel (Munich 1990), pp. 182–196, as an example of a confusion between *voluntas* and *appetitus*; see p. 182: "Voluntatis inquam, que non sit naturalis vel

conclusion is thus that *appetitus* and *voluntas* belong to completely different species, and that the appetite should be related to the intellect but strictly distinguished from the free agent.³⁹

In the beginning of chapter 14 we find a rhetorical description of the importance of the will:

Who indeed does not know that God Himself subjected all other powers to the will? Certainly all intentions, every persuasion, every command is issued by the will. Indeed, who is the one who has ever told his eye 'do not see', or his hand 'do not grasp', or his intellect 'think of this, but not of that'?⁴⁰

sensitivus appetitus, quorum ille movetur sine cognitione, iste vero cuiusdam particularis boni noticia, sed voluntatis, cuius liberum sit arbitrium, quod est actus voluntatis et rationis. Nam cum ille primum [scil. naturalis appetitus] sit in plantis, secundus [scil. sensitivus appetitus] in sensibilibus, tamen hec tertia [scil. voluntas] in creaturis ratione utentibus invenitur. Siquidem ipsa voluntas est omnium potentiarum anime, quas eminare vegetative cognoscimus, imperatrix." *Hec tertia* may cause a confusion, implying that the will is a special third kind of appetite, and not a unique power which is essentially different from all the rest. But it is obvious that Salutati is well aware of this essential difference, and this suggests an interesting critical dialogue and dialectical relation between the humanist and the scholastic. On the relation between Salutati and some of the humanists with Scotist masters see the general remark of Vasoli in his *Profezia e ragione*, p. 37. On Salutati and the will see also Trinkaus, *In Our Image and Likeness—Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought*, vol. 1, pp. 51–102. A much more confused discussion can be found in Lorenzo Valla's *De libero arbitrio*, in *Opera omnia*, 2 vols. (Torin 1962), vol. 1, p. 1003: "Prius tamen de hoc posteriore breviter satisfaciam, ubi ais, si deus futura prospicit, quia futura sunt, necessitate illum laborare, cui necesse est eventura prospicere. Hoc vero non est tribuendum necessitati, sed naturae, sed voluntati, sed potentiae" For a critical discussion of Lorenzo Valla's treatments of theological issues see Monfasani, 'The Theology of Lorenzo Valla'. Another critique of the humanist's contribution, also including an evaluation of Pomponazzi in regard to divine foreknowledge, can be found in Schabel, 'Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom: Auriol, Pomponazzi, and Luther on "Scholastic Subtleties"'.

39 Salviati, *Fridericus*, p. 177: "Appetitus itaque omnis sub eodem genere cum potentiis apprehensivis cadit: sunt enim natura agentia. Voluntas una ex altera parte manet, agensque liberum vocitatur, habetque quandam pertenuem cum appetitu concordiam. Sed intellectus etiam cum appetitu maiorem videtur habere convenientiam, ex quo una cum ipso libero agente condividitur."

40 *Ibid.*: "Quis vero ignorat Deum ipsum omnes vires alias commisisse voluntati? Omnia enim consilia, omnis persuasio, omne praeceptum voluntati fit. Quis enim est qui umquam dixerit oculo 'non inspicias', aut manui 'non rapias', aut intellectui 'cogites hoc, illud vero minime'?"

After reading once again his notion of the will into some biblical verses,⁴¹ Salviati argues that the will is the only power in the soul which is related to both sinners and pious men; this is the quality central both in theology and in ethics, and it controls all our actions and deeds.⁴² While rejecting the opinion of the fourteenth-century Doctor Franciscus Baconis (*Doctor Sublimis*) which was brought into the discussion by Octavianus to show that the will is directed, regulated, and arranged by the intellect, and that it is not subjected to anything except another will,⁴³ Fridericus introduces into the discussion the divine will, thus showing another common sophism (*sophisma*) between *intellectus* or *ratio*, which mistakenly seem to control the will, and *divina voluntas*, which the human will must obey.⁴⁴ Salviati is willing to give the intellect a much more modest role in comparison with the will: it is a spy or a messenger of the

41 *Ibid.*, pp. 177–178: “Unde et Deus ita praecipit: *Diliges Dominum Deum tuum ex toto core, ex tota mente, ex omnibus viribus tuis*. Voluntati dicitur: *Honora patrem tuum et matrem*. Sibi dicitur: *Non occides, non mechaberis*.” The biblical references are given by Šojat in the notes on p. 178.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 178: “Nullus enim nolens aut peccat aut meretur, solaque voluntas peccare et mereri potest, ac nulla ceterarum virium absque voluntate. Unde nec laude aut probro in his quae praeter nostram fiunt voluntatem afficimur, nisi interdum forsitan per accidens, ut cum nolentes quidpiam efficimus, cuius causam volumus, aut nolle poteramus (veluti is qui ebrius quempiam percutit, nolens quidem id agit, sed voluit—aut certo non potuit nolle—tantum vini sumere). Voluntas est igitur omnium motionum nostrarum regina.” It is interesting to find the same example also in Salutati’s *De nobilitate legum et medicinae*, p. 194: “Unde non bibimus quia vinum habemus, sed bibere possumus cum habemus; habere quidem vinum et bibendi spatium atque locum occasio sunt, sed bibendi voluntas est causa.”

43 *Ibid.*, pp. 178–179: “Attuleram (diu est) voluntatem subiici rationi atque obedire, quia—Doctore etiam Sublimi teste—intellectu dirigitur voluntas, eique conformatur ipsa, unde et regulat eam atque ordinat. Neque, ut dixi, schola Subtilis huic opinioni adversatur. Dixisti tamen paulo ante, voluntatem nullo pacto subiici posse cuiquam, nisi forsitan voluntati”; on p. 178 Fridericus argued that “Mens igitur et omnes vires commissae sunt voluntatis nutibus; eius vero nutus Dei maiorumque nutibus obtemperare debent. Inventi itaque voluntatem subiici voluntati; at voluntatem non voluntati subdi aut subesse, est impossibile.” On Franciscus Baconis see Šojat’s note on pp. 178–179. A much more detailed study is required on Baconis and his influence on fifteenth-century discussions of the will. Thus, Šojat could not find this opinion in Baconis’ commentary on the Sentences. We should not ignore, however, the obvious rhetorical word-play here between *Doctor Sublimis* and *schola Subtilis*, a part of Salviati’s humanistic style.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 179: “Bona utique ratio talis dici solet: et huic rationi voluntas humana parere debet. Haec vero ratio non est intellectus ipse, sed divina voluntas. Intellectus itaque agnoscit quod humana voluntas subesse debet divinae, idque scire ad ipsum attinet. Est itaque maximum id sophisma ‘intellectus scit voluntatem hanc subiici debere atque

will, spying for the commander of an army.⁴⁵ This gives Salviati an opportunity to introduce his interpretation of Juvenal's famous verse (Satire VI, 223: *Hoc volo, sic iubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas*), in which he sees a critique of human arrogance and of those who do not subject their own will to the will of their masters or to the will of the gods, thus turning their own will into the supreme reason and rule.⁴⁶ But according to the theologians, there is no higher reason than the will of God.⁴⁷ We now have to determine the relation between the human and the divine will.

Essential to this relation between human and divine will is, of course, divine grace. Salviati, following Scotus as against Thomas, argues that the grace of God should be related only to the powers of the soul and not to its essence, and among these powers only to the will.⁴⁸ He goes on to discuss the three theological virtues which he regards as belonging to the will.⁴⁹ In his discussion of faith we have again a good example of the new psychology and anthropology, according to which powers and acts, all ruled by the will, replace the dominance of essence and the virtues in the more traditional Aristotelian and Thomistic psychology. The human soul contains powers which under the command of the will, and with some help of the virtues, are roused to action. The will creates the impulse (*conatus*) without which nothing can take place. The most basic act of believing is completely dependent on this impulse. The assumption here is that since matters of faith are supernatural, man cannot

conformari primae voluntati, igitur voluntas haec subiicitur intellectui atque conformatur, veluti si dicerem 'scio te subiici regi, igitur mihi subdere'."

45 *Ibid.*, p. 180: "Est itaque non princeps huius regni intellectus, sed speculator quidam, qui imperatori exercitus quid amici, quidve hostes moliantur insinuat,—atque nuntius quidam voluntatis dici potest."

46 *Ibid.*: "Eam ob rem et Satyrus ille obiurgat eos ipsos homines qui suam voluntatem maiorum deorumque voluntati subiicere non curabant, ita inquires: 'Hoc volo, sic iubeo, sitque pro ratione voluntas', id est habent suam voluntatem pro prima ratione, primaque regula,—quod profanum esse liquet." We have already seen (in n. 22 above and context) Salviati's use of Ovid.

47 *Ibid.*: "Unde et theologi, post multotiens replicatam quaestionem cur aliquid sit, hanc ultimam ponunt rationem: 'quia Deo placuit, aut quia sic ipse voluit'; hanc rationem alia quavis ratione carere aiunt."

48 *Ibid.*, p. 181: "At ipsa [Gratia Dei], si in aliqua animae potentia ponitur, in voluntate profecto ut ponatur arbitrantur omnes. Neque hic discutiendum est an essentiam animae sive potentiam perficiat: ostensum enim a plerisque exstat, eam non posse nisi mediante potentia uniri animae. Et vero potentia voluntas." Šojat gives references to both Scotus and Thomas in his notes on p. 181.

49 *Ibid.*, p. 182: "Tres, denique, theologi praecipuas ponunt virtutes: fidem, spem, caritatem, suntque omnes fere voluntatis."

use a natural power like reason (and thus, since anyhow man's limited mind cannot understand the objects of faith, understanding is replaced by movement initiated by a certain inclination and impulse), but only a non-natural power like the will can make man move towards faith. This dynamic psychology is very far from passive fideism, which is often contrasted to intellectual tendencies in theological thinking.⁵⁰ Salviati does not miss another opportunity for biblical interpretation, this time of a more "philological" nature.⁵¹

In the discussion of *caritas* Octavianus is the one who brings in Scotus' discussion of *lumen gloriae* and *caritas*.⁵² What seems more interesting is the conclusion:

Yet in Christ the wayfarer [*viator*] both vision and love [*caritas*] were not without injury.⁵³

What we do not have here is a discussion of the will in Christ, and whether it too was injured while being *in via*. This is why this discussion in chapter 16 ends with Octavianus' question regarding the way in which the will operates: can it operate upon objects which were apprehended by the senses, or only upon objects which were previously known by reason?⁵⁴ From the point of

50 *Ibid.*: "At fides absque voluntate ad actum suum non progreditur: cum enim, ut ait Apostolus, sit *substantia sperandarum rerum, argumentum non apparentium* [Hebrews 11, 1], speranda vero credere et argumentis non apparentibus moveri ipsi rationi ex sese impossibile est (sunt enim intellectui eiusmodi neutra; sed id quod neutrum apparet, id est neque verum neque falsum, mentem quoque neutram reddit, neque ad ullam flectit partem: enimvero, propter spem quae promittitur, imperat intellectui voluntas ut ei parti sese coniungat quae a tam magna pollicente dicitur esse vera), constat igitur nos nil credere posse nisi applicemur, immo quasi vi ducamur ab ipsa—cui praemia promittuntur—voluntate. Credimus enim pleraque quorum opposita magis mentem movent: quod sine voluntatis magno conatu fieri non potest." Salviati's famous contemporaries who are usually regarded as "fideists" are Girolamo Savonarola and Giovanfrancesco Pico della Mirandola.

51 *Ibid.*: "Unde et Salvator *exprobravit incredulitatem Apostolorum et durtiam cordis*, hoc est voluntatis. Et euntibus in Emmaus, *O stulti*—ait—*et tardi corde ad credendum*. Sed in sacra Scriptura 'cordis' nomine voluntas intelligitur. Fidei igitur actus a voluntatis iussu magna in parte dependet." Šojat's reference to Mark 16, 14, and Luke 24, 25, is in the notes on p. 182.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 184. References to Scotus are in Šojat's notes.

53 *Ibid.*: "In Christo tamen viatore et visio et caritas non sine calamitate erant."

54 *Ibid.*, p. 188: "Sed id unum, quod multo tempore dubitavi, ut discutiamus cupio: possit necne voluntas ferri in aliquid visu apprehensum aut quopiam alio sensu, an solum in ea fertur quae ratio quopiam modo praenovit?"

view of all the previous distinctions, this is an eristic question, since it sets against each other a sensual way of operating upon singulars and an intellectual way of operating upon universals. But in fact, as Fridericus points out in chapter 17, entitled: *quod voluntas operari potest circa quodcumque singulare quomodocumque dicatur cognitum*, a man who knows this specific picture can express his love towards it, from which pleasure follows; whereas a man cannot love things unknown to him, yet he can love in some way things known to him.⁵⁵ Since as we have seen, Salviati presents a psychology of powers, nothing can prevent a man from willing what he sees. Since all these cognitive powers are well ordered towards this thing (*potentiae cognitivae ad id ordinatae sunt*), they operate upon objects which are present in the will, and thus they are all subjected to the will.⁵⁶

In the next chapter, entitled *rationes quibus contemplationem effert philosophus, omnes ad voluntatem referri hic apertius ostenditur*, Salviati deals with another question of Octavianus: why does Aristotle seem to praise only the intellect, and why does he hardly ever mention the superiority of the will?⁵⁷ This should be regarded on the dramatic level of the philosophical dialogue as a critical questioning of all the previous discussions and praises of the will we have seen; but it also presents Salviati's own awareness of this problematic fact which still constitutes a complicated issue also for modern scholars.⁵⁸ This may reflect Salviati's awareness of the novelty of the theory of the will he presents here; but at the same time, as a scholastic thinker, he cannot just neglect such an authority as Aristotle. As implied in the title of this chapter, the solution will present arguments which show that what Aristotle ascribes to contemplation (and to the intellect) should in fact be ascribed, as more clearly (*apertius*) shown by all (philosophers or interpreters of Aristotle), to the will. This still means that a detailed interpretative effort is required in order to

55 *Ibid.*, p. 191: "Cur igitur homo, qui hanc picturam agnoscit, non poterit erga eam elicere amorem, ex quo sequitur voluptas? Unde quamvis homo non possit amare incognita, potest tamen diligere quoquo modo cognita."

56 *Ibid.*: "Omnes enim sunt hominis potentiae. Quid itaque facit homini ut non possit, id quod videt, velle? Omnes itaque potentiae cognitivae ad id ordinatae sunt, ut obiecta faciant voluntati praesentia,—et ita suae servitutis iugo cunctae sunt submissae."

57 *Ibid.*, p. 192: "cur Aristoteles, intellectum ipsum ad sidera usque semper efferendo, de voluntatis praestantia numquam vel minimam fecit mentionem? Mirum est enim ut de tanta sublimitate eius nil umquam dixerit."

58 The problem of the will in Aristotle and in ancient philosophy in general has been the subject of many discussions in recent years. See e.g., the detailed discussion, with further references, in Dihle, *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity*. See also the discussion of Sorabji in his 'The Concept of the Will From Plato to Maximus the Confessor'.

modify some basic Aristotelian notions and bring in the new notion of the will. Such a critical question and awareness of novelty may also imply the influence of humanistic methods and ways of thought in which detailed textual comparisons and a clearer critical notion of the past with regard to the present can be found. We are moving away from Aristotle both in time and in philosophical notions, and the process of reconciliation can present also a historical and philosophical awareness of this growing gap. Salviati continues to break traditional Aristotelian distinctions: we have just seen his critique of the distinction between sensual operations upon singulars and intellectual operations upon universals; here we have a critique of the distinction between theoretical and practical knowledge.⁵⁹ Since Aristotle regarded the intellect as the best part in us, it should be regarded as extremely lovable (*summe amabilis*). This immediately brings the will into the picture since, Salviati argues, the good, the better, and the best are all objects of the will (and the operation of the will is love); and so, nothing is loveable for us which is not under the power of the will, since we can love something only through the will. The power of the will is thus the reason for anything which is best in us, and without it there will be no good or

59 This critique is most clearly expressed in Octavianus' first critical question at the very beginning of the chapter; see Salviati, *Fridericus* p. 192: "Contemplatio illa in qua Philosophus summum bonum collocasse videtur, quae Christi quoque Salvatoris testimonio est *optima pars*, in ipso quidem intellectu est. Virtutes vero morales, quae ad voluntatem spectant, non sunt ipsa contemplatione—ut placet omnibus—praestantiores." Šojat refers in his notes to the relevant sources here: Aristotle's *Ethics* and Thomas' commentary on the *Ethics*, as well as Luke 10, 42. Salviati's solution is on p. 195: "Virtutes morales magis indigent his quae ad vitam sunt necessaria quam contemplativae; ac si dicat: eo quo minor cura voluntati datur, si bonum sit aequae ut aliud, carius sibi gratiusque fit. Sic vero sese habent virtutes morales ad ipsam contemplationem. Quare praestabit contemplatio causa voluntatis." It seems that Agostino Nifo, for instance, was well aware of this problem in his 1503 account of the soul; see Agostino Nifo, *De intellectu*, ed. Leen Spruit (Leiden 2011), p. 517: "Et quoniam ratiocinamur universaliter et particulariter, ideo est voluntas et universalis et particularis. Voluntas namque universalis est intellectus. Intellectus enim dicitur prout perficitur ac formatur intentionaliter ab intellectis individuorum, et prout per ipsum intelligimus dicitur intellectus noster. Voluntas autem in quantum ad actum consequitur fuga vel prosequela, et voluntas nostra prout principium est universale prosecutionis vel fuga. Voluntas autem particularis est virtus cogitativa. Virtus enim cogitativa dicitur intellectus particularis, et aliqua ratio secundum Averroem, ut diximus. Cogitativa ergo ut movetur a formis individualibus et ratiocinatur circa illas dicitur ratio particularis ac intellectus aliquis. Ut vero per actum eius accedit nobis fuga vel prosequela, electio vel amor, dicitur voluntas particularis. Voluntas ergo quid sit, et quot modis sit patet."

best part in us.⁶⁰ Salviati presents this kind of argument, in which he identifies terms such as *mens*, *intellectus*, *contemplatio*, *sapientia*, *felicitas* with *summum bonum*, through which he can bring in *amor*, and of course *voluntas*, in the rest of this chapter.⁶¹

In chapter 19, entitled *quod vera beatitudo in voluntatis operatione consistat et sine illa nullus beatus esse possit*, Salviati presents his clear answer to the same question discussed also by Ficino, Lorenzo de' Medici, and Vincenzo Bandello. He uses the same kind of arguments we have seen in the previous chapter.⁶² By the end of the chapter Salviati presents his critique of Thomas' view, according to which Thomas prefers a non-contingent (and thus a stable) act like vision to the contingent act of the will in regard to the supreme good.⁶³ Salviati uses again the same rhetorical argument:

... should a man be described as blessed who sees, and yet does not love? But this is impossible: since someone is blessed from the point of view [*sub ratione*] of the supreme good; but the supreme good is related to the will, which if it is not in us, indeed we shall have no happiness. Many most sagacious people think that in the last day of judgment also those who are damned will intuitively see God but yet will not love Him. Thus, happiness consists in love.⁶⁴

60 Salviati, *Fridericus*, pp. 193–194: “‘Mens quippe ait [Aristoteles] est optima eorum quae nobis insunt’. Bonum namque, melius, optimumque, veluti obiecta, aut certo eorum respectus, ad voluntatem, ut diximus, referuntur. Optima igitur est mens, hoc est maxime amabilis, praeclarissima est mens, id est voluntati gratissima. Summe enim praeclarum optimum est; quod vero optimum, id amore dignissimum: universis nempe potentiis intellectus magis expetitur. Unde iam quod ipse Philosophus non distinguit voluntatem ab homine, sicut ceteras potentias remotas? Optimus namque nobis est intellectus, hoc est summe amabilis; nil vero nobis amabile quod non et voluntati (nos enim voluntate diligimus); quidquid igitur nobis optimum, id voluntatis ratione dicitur (nulla enim voluntate existente in nobis omnino, nulla utique res aut bona nobis aut optima foret).”

61 *Ibid.*, pp. 194–198.

62 *Ibid.*, p. 200: “Beatitudo, felicitas, ultimus finis et summum bonum (ut paulo ante diximus)—idem sunt; at summum ipsum bonum voluntatis est sub ea ratione: neque enim est obiectum intellectus, ut bonum est, quidpiam; cuius itaque obiectum est summum bonum, eius est et beatitudo, eius et felicitas atque finis ultimus.”

63 *Ibid.*, p. 202: “Ait [Thomas] enim: voluntas quoad eliciendum actum, contingenter se habet erga quodcumque obiectum; quae autem contingenter se habent, possunt non fieri; posita igitur visione, non eliciet voluntas necessario actum circa summum bonum.”

64 *Ibid.*, pp. 202–203: “dicetur beatus si qui videt, et tamen non amat? At id fieri nequit: beatus enim quisque sub ratione summi boni est; summum vero bonum ad voluntatem refertur, quae si nulla est in nobis, nulla profecto et beatitudo erit. Tenent plerique

The emphasis here is on the superiority of love to vision and understanding. We have already seen that love is an act of the will. As we shall see in the next chapter of Salviati's text, it represents a disposition without which we cannot use contemplation and understanding. This chapter, too, ends with a critical question by Octavianus: if love is so essential to happiness, why did Aristotle discuss happiness by using other terms (and not love)?⁶⁵ This is another reminder, provided by the dramatic *persona* of Octavianus, of the fact that we are dealing here with a new theory of which Aristotle knew nothing. But Aristotle is not the object of criticism. Fridericus admits, at the beginning of chapter 20, entitled *quomodo in contemplatione dicatur consistere beatitudo quidve activa vita sit atque contemplativa*, that Thomas was wrong on just this point.⁶⁶ It is essential for Salviati to show that the will should not be identified with practical life only. Thus, he is not willing to accept a sharp distinction between practical and contemplative life; on the other hand, his appreciation of active life should be regarded as a result of both the humanist movement and the later developments in scholastic tradition.

Salviati begins by emphasizing again the psychology of powers: contemplation is not in itself a power, but rather it needs a power in order to contemplate. This power is like a precondition or a disposition which should be present beforehand in order to make intellectual activities possible.⁶⁷ Likewise, Salviati argues, seeing is an operation adequate for observing movable objects and quantitative qualities, while God, being a free object, can be present without any movement, and thus cannot be seen.⁶⁸ The proper operation is, of course,

acutissimi viri ut ultima illa die iudicii damnandi quoque Deum intuitive videbunt, neque tamen amabunt. In amore igitur consistit beatitudo." These *acutissimi viri* are of course mainly Scotus, and Šojat gives in his notes the relevant references.

65 *Ibid.*, p. 203: "Quid ad ipsum Aristotelem aliosque eiusmodi dicendum?"

66 *Ibid.*, p. 204: "Errant igitur qui dicunt obiectum beatitudinis contemplatione fieri praesens." Šojat gives in the notes the relevant passages from Thomas.

67 *Ibid.*, pp. 203–204: "Cum vero nil, nisi praesens sit potentiae ipsi qua sapimus, contemplari possumus, contemplatione non fit 'id quod intelligitur' praesens: praecedit namque rei praesentia contemplationem eique praeponitur; sed iam id quod est praesens, non fit per quodpiam posterius praesens."

68 *Ibid.*, p. 204: "Ipsa igitur praesentia nova nil aliud est quam ipsius obiecti motio: est enim Deus liberum obiectum, potestque inesse, nec tamen movere; inexistens igitur dum libuerit movebit et videbitur, non movebit et inspicietur minime. Visio igitur ipsa erit operatio intellectus ab ipso moti obiecto. Haec vero operatio est solum qua cognoscitur quid sit ipsum movens obiectum, quale, quantaque bonitatis, quantaque felicitatis, quantaque beatitudinis; at videre—quemadmodum nec cognoscere—beatitudinem facit beatum neminem."

willing through the unifying power of love, through which alone can pleasure and delight follow.⁶⁹ God pours into the activity of our will love (*amor*) and enjoyment (*fruitio*), through which the mind becomes full of marvellous delight (*mira laetitia*).⁷⁰ This aspect in the operation of the will is essential for the internal beatitude (*beatitudo interior*), which is based upon the ability to enjoy God as its object, whereas through contemplation, just as through some first natural instinct, the object of this beatitude is kept in a constant activity of movement.⁷¹ Octavianus in his reply tries to identify the will with practical knowledge by presenting this argument: if contemplation is only an operation through which the movable object would be kept in the will, it means that any contemplation is already practical, and thus any knowledge (which we have through this contemplation) is practical too, since it is stretched out towards the activity of the will which is a practice. But then, Fridericus should explain why so many thinkers (mainly Aristotle and Thomas) preferred speculative sciences. The existence of this kind of speculative knowledge means, according to Octavianus, that there is knowledge which should not be referred to the will as its own end or purpose.⁷² Fridericus' reply makes an interesting point:

Every knowledge and skill strives after some good through the will, as it were, not through the intellect; and thus it has been instituted, and is disposed, towards the good of that, the object of which is the good itself, or a certain disposition of [its] object.⁷³

69 *Ibid.*: "Data vero eiusmodi cognitione, movetur et ipsa voluntas ab eodem obiecto, ipsaque libere erga id elicit actum volendi sive amoris, et operatur et adhaeret, et coniunctio fit mutua; . . . non posse ullo pacto voluptatem aut ullam iocunditatem sequi ex operatione intellectus, sed solum habita voluntatis operatione."

70 *Ibid.*, pp. 204–205: "Unde si Deus ipse voluntati nostrae amorem sive sui fruitionem vel quovis alio modo nomines voluntatis actum infunderet, absque eo quod intellectus quidquam—nisi ut prius—videret, iam ipso habito mira quaedam laetitia ipsam perfunderet mentem. At si omnem infundat cognitionem, voluntate nil operante, voluptas aut animi oblectatio sequetur nulla."

71 *Ibid.*, p. 205: "Beatitudo igitur interior in ipsa fruitione erit, in Deo ut obiecto, in contemplatione veluti in quodam naturali praevio, et veluti in eo quo detinetur ipsum beatitudinis obiectum in continuo motionis actu."

72 *Ibid.*: "Si enim eam ob rem poneretur ut voluntati motivum obiectum detineat, iam practica omnis contemplatio omnisque notitia esset, cum ad voluntatis actum extenderetur, qui est vere praxis. Enimvero, sunt scientiae 'speculativae' dictae, atque hae ab omnibus conceduntur. Non itaque omnis notitia ad voluntatem referetur tamquam sibi bona." Šojat refers to relevant passages in Aristotle and Thomas in the notes.

73 *Ibid.*: "Omnis cognitio omnisque ars veluti voluntate—non intellectu—bonum quoddam appetit, ita et ad bonum illius, cuius obiectum est ipsum bonum sive condicio quaedam

According to Salviati, knowledge (*cognitio*) and skill (*ars*) are also “acting” just as if they had a will. Thus he rejects the relation between the operation of the will through love and practical knowledge suggested above. Since these practical sciences are more popular in common use and have more influence, mankind should love them more. Thus, each man can prefer for himself that science which the will regards as more valuable. Salviati claims that the syllogism: “this science is being loved, the object of this science is being loved, and so this science is practical” is false, since it falsely assumes that any operation of the will is practical.⁷⁴ According to our Franciscan theologian the will is not related to practical knowledge only. A science which is solely practical presents to the will the relevant information with regard to which the will determines what is right or wrong, a good or an evil way of acting by using that goodness which we call moral.⁷⁵ But not everything is of this kind. The operation of the will with regard to this kind of knowledge which is presented by the intellect is called practice.⁷⁶ The implication is that the operation of the will goes far beyond practical knowledge. It is related to practical knowledge when in moral decisions the practical data are presented by the intellect to the will in order to reach the right decision. But the will can also act differently, for instance, as we shall shortly see, through love in contemplative life, which brings in theology and the speculative (as opposed to practical) element. Salviati concludes that this volition would be practical when it commands us to do something with regard to external things. He follows Franciscus Baconis who, according to Salviati, included in practical volition also a mere possibility or a mere intention to effect external things, or a need to effect them.⁷⁷

obiecti, instituta est et ordinatur.” We have here of course a clear echo of the opening sentence of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

- 74 *Ibid.*, pp. 205–206: “Quare fit ut illae scientiae potius sint in usu communi, vigoremque obtineant, quas magis genus humanum amet. Et quisque eam sibi praeficit quam voluntas gratiorem habet. Nulla itaque consequentia est: ‘amatur haec scientia, huiusque scientiae obiectum, est igitur practica’; ponit enim falso ut quaelibet voluntatis operatio sit praxis.” Notice that *usus communis* and *genus humanum* are contrasted to *omnes conceduntur* in Octavianus’ argument.
- 75 *Ibid.*, p. 206: “Ea namque solum scientia est practica, quae ostendit voluntati ea ipsa circa quae voluntas poterit et recte et non recte agere et esse bona aut non bona ea bonitate quam ‘moralem’ appellamus.”
- 76 *Ibid.*: “At non omnia sunt talia. Et voluntatis operatio circa eiusmodi, ab intellectu ostensa, praxis dici solet.”
- 77 *Ibid.*: “Concludamus iam ut omnis ea volitio sit practica qua imperante quidquam ad extra efficitur, atque omnis ea—secundum Doctorem Sublimem—quae, etsi nil ad extra efficiat, efficeret tamen si vel posset, vel si efficere opus esset (veluti is qui liberalitatis

What, then, about speculative sciences? It is possible to love the knowledge of the movement of the stars, to know the reasons of natural things, which would be knowing the essence of something which exists. All these sciences are not practical and do not deal with what is related to the practice of the will; but we still find in them the activity or love.⁷⁸ Here we meet again the sensitivity of Salviati regarding the common use of terms: he claims that not everyone distinguishes in common speech or discourse (*communis locutio*) between contemplation and activity, but rather, this distinction is unique only to the school of Franciscus Baconis.⁷⁹ Salviati is not using any other authority to establish his critique of Baconis and his school, but only the common usage: *dicimus enim communiter*. This common usage, in this case, seems sufficient for a philosophical argumentation, and it may represent an important shift in both style and focus of later scholastic thinkers, who try to be more sensitive to the common use of language (and more communicative also with regard to the new humanist readership), and thus less technical, in dealing with practical as well as with speculative problems.⁸⁰

With regard to this distinction between contemplation and action, Salviati argues that we do commonly say that those who live an active life act (*agunt*) or employ (*faciunt*) prudence or skill. But we also do not say that those who use contemplation and live a contemplative life (*otiosam vitam degant*) like the monks, would not supremely love and abundantly use *caritas*: rather, we say that they do not exercise in their contemplative life justice, generosity, and

officium exercere vellet, nec tamen potest; et si qui Deum amat et vult, promptus ad exsequendum omnia quae suo pro amore oportet)." It is important to notice how *amor* is used in the example with regard to God. Šojat could not find the relevant passage in Franciscus Baconis.

78 *Ibid.*: "Amare vero siderum cursus notitiam, rerum naturalium cognoscere causas, quid sit entis quiditas: hae neque practicae sunt, neque erga ea fit voluntatis praxis; fit tamen actus sive amor."

79 *Ibid.*: "Non tamen ita communi locutione contemplationem ab actione separant omnes: sed schola tantum Sublimium."

80 This point, however, can be related to the discussions concerning common principles, *communia*, discussed in the context of medieval *compendia* in Hoenen, 'Late Medieval Schools', pp. 341–345. See also the remarks on conventional language and ordinary usage of terms in Lodi Nauta, 'William of Ockham and Lorenzo Valla: False Friends. Semantics and Ontological Reduction', in *Renaissance Quarterly* 56 (2003), pp. 613–651; see especially pp. 624–625, 630–634, 636, 641–642, 645–648. And see Nauta's *In Defense of Common Sense. Lorenzo Valla's Humanist Critique of Scholastic Philosophy* (Harvard 2009), especially chapters two and three.

common skills.⁸¹ Apparently love, which is the operation of the will, plays an important role also in the contemplative life; in other words, the will is not related only to moral concerns in active life, it is deeply related (through *amor* and *caritas*) also to the contemplative life, to theology and to speculative sciences. This is why one should not distinguish contemplation from any kind of activity: contemplation is not related to actions with regard to practical decisions or politics, but it is still related to activities like love.

Salviati mentions Augustine's famous distinction between action and contemplation: according to Augustine, Martha and Peter represent the active life while Mary and John represent the contemplative life.⁸² But immediately after this Salviati indicates that according to Scotus Mary and John represent the more important part of the active life.⁸³ This interpretation represents a tendency for greater appreciation of the active life, or at least for an extension of its range.⁸⁴ It is striking that Šojat, the editor of Salviati's text, could not find this reference in Scotus. This might be an original interpretation of Salviati under the increasing influence of the humanists in fifteenth-century Italy, but also under the influence of some interesting changes and developments in the

81 Salviati, *Fridericus*, pp. 206–207: “Dicimus enim communiter, activam vitam eos agere qui prudentia sive arte quidquam agunt sive faciunt (ut de virtutibus ipsis illiberalibusque artibus patet); contemplari vero eos qui otiosam vitam degant (ut monachos contemplativos) dicimus, non quia non summe ament et caritate abundant, sed quia neque iustitiam neque liberalitatem neque artes communes exercent.”

82 *Ibid.*, p. 207: “Eo modo Augustinus quoque ipse actionem a contemplatione distinxit: vocat enim Marthae vitam quae *sagebat circa frequens ministerium*, ‘actionem’,—Mariae vero, quae *audiebat verbum dulcissimum*, ‘contemplationem’; et Ioannem Zebedaeum, qui interiore homine laborabat, vitam contemplativam significare ait,—Petrum, qui exercitio corporali multa faciebat, activam.” Šojat gives in the notes the relevant references and passages from Scripture and Augustine.

83 *Ibid.*, p. 208: “At ex opinione Subtilis Doctoris Maria et Ioannes dicendus est nobiliorem partem vitae activae tenuisse.”

84 We can find the same tendency with the same biblical theme in one of Savonarola's sermons delivered on March 18, 1496; see: Girolamo Savonarola, *Prediche Italiane Ai Fiorentini*, 4 vols. (Perugia-Venice and Florence 1930–1935), eds. Francesco Cognasso (vols. 1 and 2) and Roberto Palmarocchi (vols. 3a and 3b), vol. 3b, p. 173: “Marta adunque e Maria, che significano e li proficienti e li perfetti della vita attiva e contemplativa . . .” Perfection is related not only to contemplative life but also to active life. The sick Lazarus signifies the better part of the Florentines (*ibid.*, p. 177) and he is being helped by both Martha and Mary, active and contemplative life. The connection between active and contemplative life is described by Savonarola in another sermon (*ibid.*, p. 109) as an important part of the Scriptures. In fact, active and contemplative life complete one another and the preacher can ask his audience (*ibid.*, vol. 3a, p. 53) to assist one another in both ways.

later scholastic philosophical discourse. We know, for instance, that also in the case of Adrian of Utrecht (1459–1523), a leading and influential figure in the academic and intellectual life in Louvain and in the Low Countries, in the last two decades of the fifteenth century and the first decade of the sixteenth century, who later became pope, we can find a similar tendency in which the active life and practical questions became the arena and basis for moral discussions of *casus conscientiae* in the *Quodlibetal* disputations.⁸⁵

In his conclusion to chapter 20 Salviati first reconciles the opinions of Aristotle, Thomas, and Augustine, with regard to contemplation, clearly leaving out of this reconciliation the “opinion of Scotus” which he has just mentioned.⁸⁶ Then, he claims, it is right to say that the contemplative life represents our happiness (*felicitas nostra*), since the will is in accord with its object: the will drives the intellect to be occupied with the operation of contemplation.⁸⁷ The activity of both the will and the intellect necessarily come together towards contemplation; but there is an essential difference between them: while the activity of the will is what causes union (*coniungens*), that of the intellect is only being united (*coniunctus*). Real or true beatitude (*vera beatitudo*, as distinct from the above-mentioned *felicitas nostra*), consists in that operation which unites by its own virtue or power (*sui gratia*), whereas the intellect is dependent on, and controlled by, some other power.⁸⁸ True beatitude is thus found in the unifying activity of the will and not in contemplation or in contemplative life as such. As we have seen, this activity is independent and free, and to some extent it breaks the traditional distinction between active and contemplative life since it is dominant in both, either through its ability to make the right decision in practical matters of ethics, or through its unifying power with regard to the supreme good or God, in speculative matters of theology. From this point of view the difference between “Scotus” *nobilior pars vitae activae* and the more widely accepted opinion regarding *contemplatio* can be seen as only semantic.

85 Another example of this development can be found in the thought of the Florentine archbishop Antoninus Pierozzi. On Antoninus see the discussion in Chapter Four. For Adrian see Chapter Four, n. 72 above.

86 Salviati, *Fridericus*, p. 208: “Non abs re itaque dicere possumus ut Aristoteles ipse, sanctusque Thomas contemplationem ita acceperint veluti et Augustinus.”

87 *Ibid.*: “Et eiusmodi vita contemplativa felicitas nostra recte dicenda est. Convenit enim voluntas cum suo obiecto; intellectum et in operatione contemplationis assiduum reddit.”

88 *Ibid.*: “Uterque enim actus ad contemplationem necessario concurrat: voluntatis ut coniungentis, intellectus ut coniuncti. Sed in ea operatione quae coniungit sui gratia, vera beatitudo est,—in intellectu ut propter aliud et tamquam in ministrante.”

The next chapter, number 21, is in fact the last one in the dialogue, since the three closing chapters (22, 23, 24),⁸⁹ contain a summary of the main arguments in the form of responses to the proposed arguments presented by Octavianus in chapters 3–7.⁹⁰ These closing chapters were written according to the specific request of Octavianus from Salviati himself (though he promises that both he and Lazarus will help him).⁹¹ Chapter 21 contains Octavianus' praises of Fridericus, the duke of Urbino, and as expected it is full of rhetorical gestures.⁹² Moreover, it contains not only obvious comparisons between Fridericus and Alexander the Great or Julius Caesar, with an emphasis on Caesar's eloquence and on Alexander's famous relation to Aristotle under the image of the philosopher-king, but also, and first of all, a comparison with the mythological figure of Hermes Trismegistus.⁹³ This is of course another important humanistic feature. The figure of Hermes or Mercurius, a Greek version of the Egyptian god Thoth, became a source of inspiration for the idea of the ancient wisdom in the Florentine circle of Ficino during the 1460s and 1470s. A manuscript containing some parts of the *Corpus Hermeticum* was given to Ficino by Cosimo in 1462, and the humanist philosopher translated it by 1463. It went into print twice: in 1471, and in an improved version in 1472. Hermes was then included among Ficino's *prisci theologi*, an essential element in Ficino's own programme of spiritual renovation presented in his *De Christiana religione* and in his *Theologia platonica*, as well as in other minor writings and letters. These Hermetic writings, which were soon translated into vernacular languages and

89 *Ibid.*, pp. 210–219.

90 *Ibid.*, pp. 144–157.

91 *Ibid.*, p. 210: "Tuque, Georgi Benigne, haec quae dicta sunt et menti et litteris manda. Iuvabo et ipse, iuvabit et Lazarus noster, si quid forsani tibi excidisset."

92 E.g., *ibid.*, p. 209: "Habuit Montefeltrea haec domus imperatores atque duces, ipsius quidem militaris rei et gloria et maxima laude decoratos. Sed qui tanta eloquentia, omni sapientia referta simul et armis, valuerit, id neque e Graecis ulli neque e Romanis ipsis umquam assequi fas fuit."

93 *Ibid.*: "Trismegistum illum, quem et regem magnum et philosophum ferunt, forsani tibi conferemus? At quae rudibus illis annis philosophiae praestantia? Quaeve fictilis paucisque contenti regni gloria fuisse potuit? Fuit Caesar ipse eloquentiae splendore clarus. Sed quae sibi immortalium divinarum rerum peritia? Alexandrum quoque illum Macedonem hausisse quidem plurimum ex Aristotele philosophiam constat, sed ei omnia quam raptissime cum vita pariter ex oculis hominum defluerunt." With regard to Alexander, Šojat gives in the notes the relevant passage from Plutarch, in the Latin translation of Guarino Veronese. Once again we see how Salviati combines humanistic and scholastic traditions.

printed many times, exercised an enormous influence during the course of the following centuries upon many European intellectuals.⁹⁴

The mention of Hermes by Salviati should not be regarded as rhetorical only in the light of his later works and intellectual development, in which we find the increasing influence of spiritual mysticism, originating at least in three direct sources: the Franciscan prophetic tradition of the *Apocalypsis nova* attributed to *beato* Amadeo (João da Silva y Menezes) and his followers; Ficino's Neoplatonic project of Christian renovation, an echo of Cardinal Bessarion's earlier influence; and the influential Dominican preacher and prophet Savonarola and the movement of the *piagnoni*.⁹⁵ Such later developments can be found already in this early work of Salviati on the will, in which, as we have seen, *amor*'s unifying quality was assigned an important role, through which the will operates.

All these sources of influence, although they had their deep roots in the pagan and Christian Neoplatonism and mysticism of late antiquity, or in the medieval apocalyptic and prophetic movements, are still also a unique product of fifteenth-century Italy, mainly of fifteenth-century humanism and scholasticism. We can say that 'Scotism', or the Scotistic school as reflected in the works and intellectual development of Salviati, is merely a general title for many different trends of thought, some of which are very far from Scotus or the Scotists in the fourteenth century. 'Scotism' in this context means a very open philosophical and cultural phenomenon; it is related to many different traditions and sources, a very lively intellectual movement which embraced much of the *Zeitgeist*. Members of this school still kept some unique features with regard to Scotus or to more traditional versions of Scotism, such as the obsession with the will (beyond using the name of Scotus and being regarded by themselves and by others as Scotists), but they also adopted many different later developments, as well as taking into account many aspects and authors in the rich scholastic tradition up to the fifteenth century, in what in fact was quite an original and independent school of thought. In such a context it was possible to regard the Franciscan prophet *beato* Amadeo or the Dominican

94 On this see e.g., the classical studies by Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, especially the first four chapters; and by Walker, *The Ancient Theology: Studies in Christian Platonism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century*, especially the first two chapters. A good account of these matters with further references can be found in Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy* (Oxford 1992; repr. Oxford 2002), pp. 146–148. And see also Gentile and Gilly (eds.), *Marsilio Ficino e il ritorno di Ermete Trismegisto*.

95 These later tendencies in Salviati's works are discussed at length with further references in Vasoli's *Profezia e ragione*, pp. 17–120.

piagnone Domenico Benivieni as Scotists, to write a Scotistic commentary on one of Lorenzo de' Medici's sonnets, and to marry Platonism to Scotism.⁹⁶

3 Conclusion

Salviati, who, as we have seen, should be regarded as *princeps voluntatis*, represents in his discussion the two great contemporary traditions: the scholastic and the humanistic.⁹⁷ Thus, he was the perfect choice to protect Ficino against the “wolves” (i.e., some critics in the Curia of Ficino's approach to astrology as discussed in his *De vita*) in Rome in 1489.⁹⁸ But in fact, Ficino “would have needed” his help earlier, in his dispute with Lorenzo de' Medici held in 1474 regarding the will and the intellect, against the critique of Vincenzo Bandello. Ficino was not attacked by a wolf then, but he was sharply criticized by a Dominican friar who was a prominent scholastic philosopher. Several responses to this critique, and a developed theory of the will as the dominant power in the human soul, as well as of its importance in ethics and in theology, are presented in Salviati's discussion. As we have seen from the dramatic dynamic of the dialogue, Salviati (mainly through Octavianus' critical remarks and questions) is quite aware of the fact that he presents a theory of the will which is quite new and different from what can be found in Aristotle, Augustine, and Thomas. This is another case of the way in which scholasticism

96 On *beato* Amadeo as a Scotist see Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione*, especially pp. 88–89, 93; on Domenico Benivieni's Scotism in Ficino's circle see *ibid.*, n. 54 on p. 42 and context; on the relation between Platonism and Scotism see: *ibid.*, especially pp. 102–106; for Salviati's Scotist commentary to Lorenzo's poem see n. 1 above.

97 Though he was obviously a scholastic thinker, a product of the later scholastic philosophy, Salviati's relations with the humanist culture had very deep roots, as can be seen also in his critique of the misrepresentations of the poets of *amor* as *puer nudus et caecus*, caused by their improbity, since they do not know that *amor* is in fact subjected to the will; see Salviati, *Fridericus*, p. 211: “Pingunt autem poetae amorem puerum nudum et caecum, ob eorum improbitatem voluntatis qui nolunt divinae superiorumque voluntati subdi . . .” On this well-known Renaissance theme both in literature and art, see Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance*, especially chapter four.

98 On this affair see Ficino's letter in his *Opera*, vol. 1, pp. 574–575; this letter was edited and translated in Marsilio Ficino, *Three Books On Life*, eds. Carol V. Kaske and John R. Clark (New York 1989), pp. 402–405. More details on this affair, with further references, can be found in Kraye, ‘Ficino in the Firing Line: A Renaissance Neoplatonist and his Critics’, in Allen, Rees and Davies (eds.), *Marsilio Ficino: His Theology, His Philosophy, His Legacy*, pp. 377–397; see especially pp. 377–378. This letter is also mentioned in Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione*, p. 42, n. 55.

and humanism in fifteenth-century Italy influence and condition one another. Yet we must remember that many of Salviati's writings are still available only in manuscript form, and that most of his writings have not been studied with sufficient scholarly attention and empathy for their own merits. I hope that the present discussion has shown that this task is indeed a *desideratum* for the students of both scholasticism and humanism in the fifteenth century.

In the next chapter we shall examine another interesting account of the role of the intellect and the will in the human soul.

On the Importance of Self-Reflexivity

As we have already seen, the intellectual history of the fifteenth century has attracted scholarly attention, for the most part, to a new trend represented by a heterogeneous group of lay intellectuals who were professional men of letters: the humanists, who dedicated themselves to the *studia humanitatis* and the *artes sermonales*, developing new scholarly methods (philological and historical approaches) and using them in their efforts to reinterpret ancient Greek and Latin texts.¹ The humanists were regarded as precursors of modernity, severe critics of traditional viewpoints, pioneers of the Scientific Revolution, rationalism, and secularization in the West.² Although it is easy to criticize these

- 1 For the beginnings of the humanist movement in Italy see Ronald G. Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni* (Leiden 2000); *The Two Latin Cultures and the Foundation of Renaissance Humanism in Medieval Italy* (Cambridge 2012). For some detailed studies of the humanists in many different contexts and an appreciation of their achievements see the works of Eugenio Garin, *Medioevo e Rinascimento; L'umanesimo italiano. Filosofia e vita civile nel Rinascimento* (Bari 1952; reprinted Bari 1970); *La cultura filosofica del Rinascimento italiano—ricerche e documenti*. See also the works of Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters; Renaissance Thought and its Sources; Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* III. On Garin and Kristeller different approaches see Hankins, 'Two Twentieth-Century Interpreters of Renaissance Humanism: Eugenio Garin and Paul Oskar Kristeller', in his *Humanism and Platonism in the Italian Renaissance*, vol. 1, pp. 573–590; and Celenza, *The Lost Italian Renaissance—Humanists, Historians, and Latin's Legacy* (Baltimore 2004), chapter two. And see also Albert Rabil, Jr. (ed.), *Renaissance Humanism. Foundations, Forms, and Legacy*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia 1988); Vasoli, *Le filosofie del Rinascimento*.
- 2 For one influential example see Kristeller's *Marsilio Ficino and his Work after Five Hundred Years*, p. 16: "... [Ficino's] greatest significance as a thinker (and also as a scholar) rests on the fact that he constitutes an important member and link (not always recognized) in that golden chain which is the tradition of rational metaphysics that leads from the Presocratics and Plato to Kant, Hegel and beyond. In my long career as a scholar, and in the midst of hard, difficult and often disastrous times, this tradition has been for me a rock of intellectual and moral support, much stronger than the numerous fashionable theories and ideologies that have come and gone in rapid succession over the years. I hope that this tradition will also give the same support, in the midst of future crises which can hardly be avoided, to some of our successors among the thinkers and scholars of the future." See also Witt, 'The Humanism of Paul Oskar Kristeller', in John Monfasani (ed.), *Kristeller Reconsidered. Essays on his Life and Scholarship* (New York 2006), pp. 257–267; and Grendler, 'Paul Oskar Kristeller On Renaissance Universities', in Monfasani (ed.), *Kristeller Reconsidered*, pp. 89–130.

historiographical assumptions, I would like to focus in the present chapter on another issue, still relatively neglected by many students of the Renaissance: the humanist approach to traditional questions which were discussed in the scholastic schools. I shall present as a case-study the humanists' treatment of one question, which concerns the intellect and the will as the two dominant faculties in the human soul. By doing so I hope to provide yet another indication of the relations between the humanists and the scholastics and to offer—as in the previous chapters—a contextualized perspective from which to evaluate both groups.

As we have seen in the previous two chapters, the question concerning the intellect and the will, one of the most disputed subjects amongst late scholastic thinkers, Thomists and Scotists alike, seems to have received a new impetus during the fifteenth century. This impetus was derived from both internal developments in fifteenth-century scholasticism and from the humanist penchant for bringing recently rediscovered ancient philosophical texts into traditional discussions. This brought about complicated relations between scholastic and humanist philosophers on issues common to both groups, such as human dignity and the place of man in nature.³

Discussions of whether the intellect or the will is the better or superior faculty and of the precise relationship between them, as well as a detailed account of their moral psychology and of voluntary actions, cannot—as we have seen in Chapter Five—be found in ancient classical sources and are essentially the creation of the medieval philosophical schools. The notion of will was not often explicitly discussed in ancient thought; and it was Augustine who first described the will as an independent faculty in the human soul.⁴ Nevertheless,

3 One famous example is Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's 1486 oration, where we find a clear connection between human dignity and freedom of choice; see Bausi (ed.), *Discorso sulla dignità dell'uomo*, pp. 6–10. One should notice that Pico, as we have noted in Chapter Six, n. 13, does not use *voluntas* or *libertas* here, but only *arbitrium* and *arbitrarius*. See also the references to Trinkaus' account of *Salutati* in Chapter Five, n. 26 above.

4 Augustine emphasized three inseparable mental qualities: memory, intellect, and will; see, e.g., *De trinitate* IV, 21, where we have an analogy between these three qualities and the three persons of the trinity: "Et quemadmodum cum memoriam meam et intellectum et voluntatem nomino, singula quidem nomina ad res singulas referuntur sed tamen ab omnibus tribus singula facta sunt; nullum enim horum trium nominum est quod non et memoria et intellectus et voluntas mea simul operata sint; ita trinitas simul operata est et vocem patris et carnem filii et columbam spiritus sancti cum ad personas singulas haec singula referantur." For the ancient classical context see Dihle, *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity*; specifically on Augustine see chapter VI. See also the discussion of Sorabji in his 'The Concept of the Will From Plato to Maximus the Confessor'.

we should not assign the over-simplified labels of 'intellectualist' and 'voluntarist' to Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, or other scholastic thinkers.⁵ If we consider the different formulations of this question by Thomas, in many different contexts, a much more complicated picture emerges. He treats the will as an intellectual appetite (*appetitus intellectivus*) in his commentary on Aristotle's *De anima*.⁶ In his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, however, he provides further details: the intellect and the will belong to the superior part in the human soul; and while the intellect is superior to the will according to its origin, the will is superior to the intellect according to its perfection.⁷ For Thomas, the will is that special appetite which follows the intellect's perception.⁸ On the other hand, it is more attached to action than to the intellect, and it is

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- 5 For one example, see the fourteenth-century Franciscan Francis of Marchia, in his *Commentarius in IV libros sententiarum Petri Lombardi. Quaestiones praeambulae et prologus*, ed. Nazarenus Mariani OFM (Grottaferrata 2003), pp. 518–519: “Ad cuius evidenciam est sciendum quod alia est noticia que ordinatur ad actum voluntatis directe, ratione obiecti, alia quidem indirecte; verbi gratia, directe quidem ut noticia actus voluntatis ostensiva: hec enim directe est immediate propter actum voluntatis; sicut enim voluntas non potest alia velle nisi precognita, ita nec per actum proprium; nichil enim potest velle per modum obiecti nisi sit primo ab intellectu apprehensum, unde, licet voluntas primo habeat velle per modum actus et forme ipsam informantis quam intellectus illud velle intelligat obiective, tamen voluntas non primo habet illud velle per modum obiecti quam intellectus illud intelligat obiective, ymo, ut sic, est e converso, quia nunquam voluntas potest habere suum proprium actum per modum obiecti nisi primo illud habeat intellectus per modum obiecti, verbi gracia de secundo, quia illa noticia ordinatur indirecte ad actum voluntatis que est ostensiva alicuius obiecti boni; talis enim noticia ordinatur indirecte ad actum dilectionis de illo bono, non ratione sui, sed ratione obiecti inclusi.” And see Alliney, ‘Francis of Marchia’s Theory of the Will’.
- 6 Thomas Aquinas, *In Aristotelis librum de anima commentarium* 2, 5, 288: “Si autem est ibi sensitivum, oportet quod adsit tertium, scilicet appetitivum. Quod quidem dividitur in tria: scilicet desiderium, quod est secundum vim concupiscibilem; et iram, quae est secundum vim irascibilem: qui duo appetitus pertinet ad partem sensitivam: sequuntur enim apprehensionem sensus. Tertium autem est voluntas, quod est appetitus intellectivus, consequens scilicet apprehensionem intellectus.” And see also in 3, 15, 824: “Non est autem dicendum quod appetitus moveat sub specie intellectus, sed magis e converso; quia intellectus non invenitur movens sine appetitu; quia voluntas, secundum quam movet intellectus, est quidam appetitus.”
- 7 Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros sententiarum*, I, dist. 1, q. 1, a. 1: “Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod appetitus semper sequitur cognitionem. Unde, sicut inferior pars habet sensum et appetitum, qui dividitur in irascibilem et concupiscibilem, ita suprema pars habet intellectum et voluntatem, quorum intellectus est altior secundum originem et voluntas secundum perfectionem.”
- 8 *Ibid.*, I, dist. 45, q. 1, a. 1: “Et ideo in nobis secundum duplicem cognitionem sensus et intellectus est duplex appetitiva: una quae sequitur apprehensionem intellectus, quae voluntas

more a master of its own activity (and thus truly free) than the intellect, since the intellect is compelled to act always according to the same truth. For this reason, man is regarded as good or evil according to the act of his will, which is identified with moral agency.⁹ Yet in Thomas' *Summa theologiae* we find that the will and the intellect include one another, with no sign of real contrast between them.¹⁰ They differ only in the way they act: the intellect acts thanks to its similarity to the thing which is understood, while the will acts thanks to an inclination towards the thing which it willed.¹¹ Thomas regarded both the intellect and the will as rational faculties which act in accordance with nature, so that the will is unable not to adhere to the good which is its object.¹² This point was severely criticized by Scotus, who distinguished between liberty and nature and between contingent and necessary activity: each power can act either according to nature or according to liberty. All powers except the will are natural and thus necessary and not free. Therefore, the intellect does

dicitur; alia quae sequitur apprehensionem sensus, quae dividitur in irascibilem et concupiscibilem."

- 9 *Ibid.*, II, dist. 7, q. 2, a. 1: "Ad secundum dicendum, quod voluntas est domina sui actus magis quam intellectus, qui ipsa rei veritate compellitur; et ideo secundum actum voluntatis homo dicitur malus vel bonus, quia actus voluntatis est actus hominis, quasi in ejus potestate existens; non autem secundum actum intellectus, cujus ipse non est dominus." Compare with the formulation in II, 25, 1, 2, where the will is superior, for it holds the power over all the faculties of the soul, since the end is its object. Thomas introduces here his notion of freedom: "Ad quartum dicendum, quod quamvis intellectus sit superior virtus quam voluntas ratione ordinis, quia prior est et a voluntate praesupponitur; tamen voluntas etiam quodammodo superior est, secundum quod imperium habet super omnes animae vires, propter hoc quod ejus objectum est finis; unde convenientissime in ipsa summum libertatis invenitur; liber enim dicitur qui causa sui est..."
- 10 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a, q. 16, a. 5: "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod voluntas et intellectus se mutuo includunt; nam intellectus intelligit voluntatem, et voluntas vult intellectum intelligere. Sic ergo inter illa quae ordinantur ad objectum voluntatis, continentur etiam ea quae sunt intellectus; et e converso."
- 11 *Ibid.*, 1a, q. 27, a. 4: "Ad cujus evidentiam considerandum est quod haec est differentia inter intellectum et voluntatem: quod intellectus fit in actu per hoc quod res intellecta est in intellectu secundum suam similitudinem, voluntas autem fit in actu, non per hoc quod aliqua similitudo voliti sit in volente, sed ex hoc quod voluntas habet quendam inclinationem in rem volitam."
- 12 *Ibid.*, 1a, q. 62, a. 8: "Ad secundum dicendum quod virtutes rationales se habent ad opposita in illis ad quae non ordinantur naturaliter; sed quantum ad illa ad quae naturaliter ordinantur, non se habent ad opposita. Intellectus enim non potest non assentire principiis naturaliter notis; et similiter voluntas non potest non adhaerere bono, in quantum est bonum, quia in bonum naturaliter ordinatur sicut in suum objectum."

not have the power to act more or less firmly: it always acts according to its relation with the truth or the natural principle which moves it. It is within the power of the will, however, to agree more firmly with the good or not to agree with it. Thus, Scotus claims that the intellect's relation to the truth cannot be taken as a model for the will's pursuit of the good.¹³ What is more fundamental for him is to determine how exactly the intellect and the will act, in terms of necessity and contingency, liberty and nature. Epistemology is also involved here, since the act of the will is not described by Scotus as an abstraction of a universal from a singular: instead, many willed things are presented to the will by the intellect, and the will can will each one of the things presented to it.¹⁴ While the intellect, for Scotus, is a natural power which is not free—i.e., it always acts in the same way with regard to an object which affects it—in other words, the intellect is constrained by the object, and there is no element of free choice in its activity¹⁵—the will is a free power which acts contingently and can, for instance, choose or not choose a sinful act. But it is beyond the power of the will to determine the very nature of an act which is presented to it; the will cannot change the nature of a given object or act, but can only to choose between acts.¹⁶ Some interesting implications in the fields of moral

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- 13 John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, dist. 1, p. 2, q. 1; see P. C. Balić (ed.), *Ioannis Duns Scoti opera omnia* (Vatican City 1950), vol. 2, p. 16: "Ad quantum dico quod intellectus assentit cuilibet vero secundum evidentiam ipsius veri quam natum est facere de se in intellectu, et ideo non est in potestate intellectus firmiter vel minus firmiter assentire vero sed tantum secundum proportionem ipsius veri moventis; in potestate autem voluntatis est intensius assentire bono vel non assentire, licet imperfectius viso, et ideo consequentia non valet de vero respectu intellectus et de bono respectu voluntatis." On the notion of the will in Scotus and among the Scotists in the fourteenth century see, once again, the detailed studies of Alliney, cited in Chapter Two, n. 51. See also Hoenen, 'Scotus and Scotist School. The Tradition of Scotist Thought in the Medieval and Early Modern Period'.
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 33: "Dico quod voluntas non abstrahit universale a singulari, sed voluntati ostenduntur plura volita per intellectum qui est aliquorum plurium inclusorum in primo obiecto, quorum utrumque ut sic ostensum potest voluntas velle."
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 35: "Quantum ad tertium articulum de potentia creaturae dico quod intellectus non potest per potentiam suam naturalem videre essentiam non videndo personam, quia cum intellectus de se sit potentia naturalis et non libera, agente obiecto intellectus agit quantum potest; ergo si obiectum ex parte sui agit manifestando tres personas intellectui, non est in potestate intellectus ut videat aliquid ostensum et aliquid non videat."
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 36, n. a: "Sed de potestate absoluta voluntatis est magis dubium. Tamen ibi potest dici quod non est in potestate voluntatis frui sic et non sic, quia licet in potestate voluntatis sit aliquis actus ut ponatur in esse habeat illam condicionem vel non habeat quae naturaliter competit actui ex ratione obiecti. Exemplum: licet in potestate voluntatis sit elicere actum peccati vel non elicere, tamen si actus positus in esse habeat inordinationem,

psychology and moral theology arise from the fact that it is impossible, according to Scotus, for the same power to act differently in the present life (*in via*) and in the future life (*in patria*). Thus, the will also acts freely and contingently *in patria* towards the supreme good and beatitude, and cannot 'not will' it. But 'not willing' *in patria* does not imply any evil or offence towards the perfection of the supreme good.¹⁷

We turn now to Alamanno Donati's discussion concerning the intellect and the will, comparing it whenever necessary with three contemporary discussions—Ficino's 'humanist' treatment of this issue, and two 'scholastic' treatments, by the Scotist Salviati and the Thomist Bandello (already discussed in the two previous chapters)—as well as with the position of the scholastic schools in general. Donati's *De intellectus voluntatisque excellentia* was most probably written between 1482–1487,¹⁸ and it provides further evidence for the connection between humanist and scholastic thinkers in fifteenth-century

non est in potestate voluntatis ut actus positus sic in esse sit vel non sit inordinatus; actus autem fruitionis quantum est ex natura obiecti primi natus est ut sit trium personarum in essentia, quia—non ponendo aliquod miraculum—ex parte obiecti erit de se trium; igitur non videtur esse in potestate voluntatis ut actus positus in esse sit essentiae ut in tribus vel non ut in tribus."

- 17 John Duns Scotus, *Lectura in librum primum sententiarum* I, dist. 1, p. 2, q. 2; see Balić (ed.), *Ioannis Duns Scoti opera omnia*, vol. 16, p. 100: "Item dico quod duo sunt actus voluntatis positivi, scilicet nolle et velle; et licet nolle non sit nisi respectu alicuius quod habet rationem mali, vel respectu obiecti defectivi, tamen voluntas potest negative non velle obiectum in quo est nihil mali nec ratio obiecti defectivi, quia sua libertas est ad contradictoria; unde licet non potest nolle beatitudinem, potest tamen non velle illud." This passage is cited and discussed in Alliney, 'La contingenza della fruizione' p. 639, n. 25, and context.
- 18 This short treatise was edited and published (but without an *apparatus fontium*) by Lambertus Borghi, in *Bibliofilia* XLII (1940), pp. 108–115. Borghi presented a short biographical and intellectual sketch of Donati in his *praefatio* on pp. 108–109, with references to some archive documents regarding Donati's father published in Kristeller (ed.), *Supplementum Ficinianum*, 2 vols. (Florence 1937), vol. 1, p. 126, and to Ficino's letters in which Donati is mentioned in *Opera*, vol. 1, pp. 716–717 (Ficino's reply to Donati, regarding Platonic love and the powers in the human soul according to Plato), 834 (Ficino's letter to Poliziano regarding the love of the Muses, in which he mentions and warmly recommends Donati), 848 (another mention of Donati in Ficino's letter to Lorenzo de' Medici, introducing to Lorenzo Donati's translation of the *Historia de duobus amantibus* by Enea Silvio Piccolomini), 894 (Ficino's letter to Amerigo Corsini, in which he mentioned Donati's death), 936–937 (Ficino's famous 'catalogue of friends and students' in his letter to Martin Prenninger, in which he mentions Donati in the second group, among his students). Ficino's letter to Donati can be found in Gentile (ed.), *Lettere II—Epistolarum familiarium liber II*, pp. 111–114.

Italy, and for their common interest in philosophical and theological questions which were part of the medieval heritage.

1 Donati and his Text

We know very little about Alamanno Donati. He was born in Florence in 1458 and was a student of Giorgio Antonio Vespucci and of Ficino. He died in 1488.¹⁹ He was apparently among Ficino's young students during the 1470s and 1480s, together with Giovanni Nesi, Giovanni di Donato Cocchi, Carlo Marsuppini the Younger, and others.²⁰

The style, structure, and sources of Donati's treatise are similar to what one finds in the writings of Ficino, Pico and other humanist-oriented philosophers of the fifteenth century, combining classical rhetoric with philosophical arguments. Aristotle is mentioned and cited several times, and it is clear that "the philosopher" is the main explicit source;²¹ but Donati also

19 We know it from Ficino's letter dated November 4, 1488, to Amerigo Corsini, in which he laments the death of his young student; see Ficino, *Opera*, vol. 1, p. 894: "... de crudeli nimium obitu Alamanni Donati academiae Martis, hunc equidem hanc ob causam Martem academiae nomino, quoniam magnanimus Iuvenis et facundus unumquemque nostrum contra lividos detractores acerrime defendebat." For some more biographical details see the *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome 1992), vol. 41, pp. 6–9. The only other literary work by Donati that we have beside the treatise on the intellect and the will is his Italian translation of pope Pius II Piccolomini's *Historia de duobus amantibus* (1444), one of the most popular works in the fifteenth century which is focused on love, a theme which was also very central in Ficino's circle. On Giorgio Antonio Vespucci (c.1434–1514) see Karl Schlebusch, 'Per una biografia di Giorgio Antonio Vespucci', in *Memorie Domenicane* 28 (1997), pp. 152–154. And see also Francesca Gallori and Simone Nencioni, 'I libri greci e latini dello scrittorio e della biblioteca di Giorgio Antonio Vespucci', in *Memorie Domenicane* 28 (1997), pp. 155–359.

20 On Nesi see Cesare Vasoli's article cited in n. 22 below as well as Celenza, *Piety and Pythagoras in Renaissance Florence—The Symbolum Nesianum*. On Cocchi see Arnaldo Della Torre's *Storia dell'Accademia Platonica di Firenze*, p. 725. On Carlo Marsuppini the Younger see Ficino, *Opera*, vol. 1, p. 937; his brother Cristoforo is mentioned by Donati as one of the participants in a debate concerning the dignity of the intellect and the will of which Donati's text is the written account. See Donati, *De intellectus*, p. 109.

21 On the complex issue of Renaissance Aristotelianism see, e.g., Kristeller's *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* III, pp. 341–392. See also the discussion, with further references, in Copenhaver and Schmitt, *Renaissance Philosophy*, pp. 60–126. And see Luca Bianchi, *Studi sull'Aristotelismo del rinascimento* (Padua 2003); and his 'Continuity and Change in the Aristotelian Tradition', in Hankins (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to*

refers to Pythagoras, Horace, Porphyry, Varro and *divus Plato noster*. The only scholastic philosopher mentioned here is Thomas Aquinas, to whom Donati refers with the same formula that he applies to Plato: *divus noster Aquinas*. After a short opening section (p. 109), he presents ten arguments for the excellence and superiority of the intellect (pp. 109–111), ten arguments for the excellence and superiority of the will (pp. 111–114), and some concluding remarks (pp. 114–115).

It is remarkable that we find in this relatively short discussion three accounts of human dignity. At the very beginning Donati argues that it is self-reflexivity which gives preeminence to man:

Indeed, our best father, man's nature is such that only when he knows himself is he superior to other living creatures; if he neglects this, man would necessarily be stripped of his own nature. Hence we have this maxim: 'know yourself!', and also that saying by the wisest Pythagoras, 'venerate yourself, man, lest you defile the most sacred temple of God'; for in man God erected His own tent.²²

Renaissance Philosophy (Cambridge 2007), pp. 49–71. And see the discussion of this issue with further references in the introduction.

- 22 Donati, *De intellectus*, p. 109: "Hominis, equidem, ea natura est, optime pater, ut tunc solum caeteris animantibus praestet, quando se ipsum cognoscat; si vero hoc negligat, hominis naturam exuat necesse est. Hinc illud 'nosce te ipsum'; huc et illud sapientissimi Pythagorae tendit 'venerare te ipsum, o homo, ne fedes dei castissimum templum'; in homine enim deus tabernaculum suum posuit [Leviticus 26, 11–12; Ezekiel 37, 27; Revelation 21, 3, with variations]." As indicated in the dedicatory note, Donati dedicated his text to Guiglelmus Capponi, to whom he refers in the citation above as *optime pater*. For another use of the same maxim in contemporary Florence among the same group of young humanist-oriented philosophers, some of whom were students of Ficino, see Giovanni Nesi's sermon which was delivered in 1476 and published in Cesare Vasoli, 'Giovanni Nesi tra Donato Acciaiuoli e Girolamo Savonarola—Testi editi e inediti', in *Memorie Dominicane* 4 (1973), pp. 103–179; see p. 142: "La seconda contemplatione, Preclarissimi Padri et amantissimi Frategli, è quando la creatura, considera la suprema dignità del suo creatore, rievocando la mente a sé medesima, cognosce sé in tanto infimo grado essere collocata che nulla comparatione col lui se ne può fare, perché fra la cosa infinita et la finita non è misura; et vedendo lui divino, lei humana, lui immortale, lei mortale, lui Signore di tutti signori, lei, se in peccato si truova, serve di tutti e' servi, lui, finalmente, da ogni vitio nettissimo et immacolato, lei in tanta lordura di peccato coinquinata, niente di meno quanto egli è superiore, tanto più in terra humiliarsi, observa quel precepto che da Apolline pythio, come cosa difficillima, è comandato, cioè sé medesima cognosce, ricordarsi de' suo' peccati, si riduce alla memoria e' suoi flagitii, si ravede de' suoi errori; di che ne nasce vera contritione, intera penitentia, et proposito di non peccare..."

Donati chooses to open his discussion with two explicit references to pagan antiquity, the famous maxim of Delphi Γνῶθι σεαυτόν ('know thyself') and a saying of Pythagoras, combined with an implicit allusion to some biblical verses (e.g., Ezekiel 37, 27: "et erit tabernaculum meum in eis et ero eis Deus et ipsi erunt mihi populus"), in order to lend support to his statement on the importance of self-knowledge or self-reflexivity. The wisdom of pagan antiquity and of the Bible treat man's awareness of his own situation as essential to his dignity. This opening statement, I would contend, already hints to the conclusion of Donati's treatise and indicates its novelty. Self-consciousness or self-reflexivity are central to the relationship between man and God in theology, as well as to the relationship between human beings in ethics. As we shall shortly see in the detailed discussion of Donati's arguments concerning the intellect and the will, he presents two other accounts of human dignity: one focused on the intellect and the other on the will.

Immediately after this opening statement Donati presents his reason for writing this text: just as in Ficino's letter of 1474,²³ here too we have an echo, in the form of a written account, of a debate held during the previous few days in the house of the Dominican friar and future bishop of Cortona Guglielmo Capponi (most probably at Altopascio), to whom Donati dedicated his treatise. The other participants in this debate were Guglielmo's brother Bernardo Capponi, and Cristoforo Marsuppini, the son of the famous humanist Carlo Marsuppini.²⁴

Compare this with one of the condemned 1277 theses in Piché with Lafleur (eds.), *La condamnation parisienne de 1277*, p. 114: "115 (145). Quod anima intellectiva cognoscendo se cognoscit omnia alia. Species enim omnium rerum sunt concretae. Set hec cognitio non debetur intellectui nostro, secundum quod noster est, set secundum quod est intellectus agens." For Pythagoreanism in the Renaissance, and especially in Ficino's circle including Nesi, see Celenza, 'Pythagoras in the Renaissance', in *Renaissance Quarterly* 52 (1999), pp. 667–711; *Piety and Pythagoras*.

23 Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 201: "Cum ego ac tu nuper in agro Charegio multa de felicitate ultro citroque disputavissemus, tandem in sententiam eandem duce ratione convenimus, ubi tu novas quasdam rationes, quod felicitas in voluntatis potius quam intellectus actu consistat, subtiliter invenisti. Placuit autem tibi ut tu disputationem illam carminibus, ego soluta oratione conscriberem. Tu iam eleganti poemate tuum officium implevisti, ego igitur nunc aspirante Deo munus meum exequar quam brevissime." Part of this passage is cited in Chapter Five, n. 37 above.

24 Donati, *De intellectus*, p. 109: "Sed quorsum haec? nempe cum apud te proximis diebus essem, orta est non iniucunda, ardua ac perutilis de ipsius intellectus ac voluntatis nobilitate quaestio superque ea satis abunde pro tempore ultro citroque est disputatum. Nam aderat carissimus frater tuus Bernardus, vir sane cum prudentia tum doctrina singularis; aderat et Cristophorus Marsuppinus, poetae Charoli non degener filius. Tamen (ut

The next two sections will explore the two sets of arguments presented by Donati: ten arguments in support of the superiority of the intellect, and ten in support of the superiority of the will. Donati does not seem to have—or at least to wish to demonstrate—a preference for either of the two. The relation between these two sets of arguments and self-consciousness will be discussed at the end of this chapter. Donati's use of the various sources is important in such a context, since we have here a man who straddles the two camps of scholasticism and humanism, and can read some of the new texts as well as the old ones.

2 Arguments for the Superiority of the Intellect

Already in the first set of arguments supporting the superiority of the intellect we find that Donati describes human psychology in terms of powers or faculties (*potentiae* and *vires*), while the virtues play a relatively marginal role. In the first argument, seeing, knowing, and understanding (the powers of the intellect) are regarded as superior to other powers. These powers are compared to a living body, which is superior to a dead body.²⁵ The conclusion of this argument presents what can be regarded as an extreme intellectualist position:

But the intellect is of this kind, that it has such a perspicacious power that it would not only know the genus of demons, but indeed somehow it would proceed towards God, as if it were itself God.²⁶

The human intellect is thus very powerful and it plays a central role in the relation between man and God. This is already a step towards identifying the essence of man with the intellect.

verum fatear) iniuria temporis, necessaria quaedam sunt ommissa, quae tibi e christianis theologis pro viribus oratione recensere non ingratum fore duxi." On Guglielmo Capponi (1449–c.1513) see the *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol. 19 (Rome 1976), pp. 60–62.

25 *Ibid.*: "Quemadmodum corpus vivens vita carenti praestat, ita et potentia videns, cognoscens et intelligens (communi omnium sententia) nobilior ea est et praesrantior quae neque videt perspicit et cognoscit."

26 *Ibid.*: "Huiusmodi autem est intellectus, cuius tanta vis est et perspicacia ut non modum demonum genus noverit, quin immo in deum quodammodo transeat, quasi ipse sit deus." A similar argument can be found in Ficino's letter, supporting the superiority of love and will; see Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 207: "Illic in nos Deum quasi deicimus, hic vere attollimus nos ad Deum..." Gentile, the editor, refers here to the same argument in the *Theologia platonica*; see *Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum*, vol. 4, p. 320.

In the second argument we find for the first time a comparison between the intellect and the will. Self-sufficiency is here the criterion for preferring the intellect, which does not need the will for its operations. The will, on the other hand, cannot act without the intellect, and therefore, we cannot love things which are unknown to us. It is perhaps important to draw a comparison between Donati's and Salviati's formulation of this argument. While Donati writes that

There is no doubt that that thing which is by no means sufficient for itself is more insignificant and imperfect than that which is sufficient for itself. Hence that which lacks nothing is said to be the most perfect thing in nature. That is the intellect, which produces its own operation totally without the will, since it can understand without the will. But the will cannot [act without the intellect]; inasmuch as we [can] love detested things, [but we can] never love unknown things.²⁷

for Salviati

... for something to exist together with something else, and to be in need of something else, if there is no mutual coexistence, is more insignificant and imperfect: hence that which is in need of nothing is regarded as most perfect. But the act of the will is in need of, and coexists with, the act of the intellect, but the intellect does not coexist with the act of the will (for we can understand without the will, but we cannot will unless we understand: since we are moved through the will only by things which we knew before); thus, the intellect is more noble.²⁸

27 *Ibid.*: "Id proculdubio quod sibi nequaquam sufficere valet ignobilius est et imperfectius eo quod sibi sufficit. Ex quo perfectissimum in natura dicitur quod nihilo indiget. Is est intellectus, qui operationem suam absque voluntate utique producit, cum absque ea intelligere possit. Voluntas vero minime, quando invisam diligamus, incognita nequaquam."

28 Salviati, *Fridericus*, p. 151: "... coexistere aliquid necessario et indigere illo, si non sit mutua coexigentia, ignobilius et imperfectius est: unde qui nullius indiget, perfectissimus dicitur; sed actus voluntatis poscit et coexigit actum intellectus, hic vero non exigit illum (intelligere namque possumus absque voluntate, velle certo non valemus nisi cognoscamus: ferimur enim in ea solum quae praevenimus); praeclarior igitur intellectus ipse"; and see also on p. 191: "Cur igitur homo, qui hanc picturam agnoscit, non poterit erga eam elicere amorem, ex quo sequitur voluptas? Unde quamvis homo non possit amare incognita, potest tamen diligere quoquo modo cognita." This last quotation is also quoted and discussed in Chapter Six, n. 55 above and context.

What we have here are two formulations of the same argument, comparing the activity of the intellect and the will on the basis of self-sufficiency. One notices, however, that Thomas, for instance, was very cautious when he discussed the intellect's sufficiency, emphasizing the insufficiency of the human intellect, its weakness in comparison to the angels and its constant need of divine light (although this is not said in the context of comparing the intellect and the will).²⁹ Donati's humanistic-inclined formulation, and Salviati's scholastic-inclined one, seem to reflect a later development in the scholastic schools, where the intellect and the will were directly contrasted between them under the increasing tension between the Thomists and the Scotists, and the argument of self-sufficiency was used.

In the next argument Donati presents the intellect as the power which is peculiar and proper to man, and because of this, it is only through the intellect that man can reach beatitude. The intellect is here contrasted to the appetite, which is identified with the will, and thus regarded as not proper to man's intellectual nature and as dependent on the intellect.³⁰ This argument depends on one presupposition: the beatitude of an intellectual nature is the supreme good and end (*beatitudo naturae intellectualis potissimum bonum et*

29 Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros sententiarum*, II, dist. 7, q. 2, a. 2: "Et ideo ex phantasmatis illustratis lumine angelico resultat aliquorum cognitio in intellectu possibili hominis, ad quam eliciendam illustratio intellectus agentis humani non sufficeret, cum lumen ejus sit debilius lumine angeli"; II, dist. 28, q. 1, a. 5: "Aliorum vero opinio est quod intellectus agens sit quaedam potentia animae rationalis; et hanc sustinendo, non potest rationabiliter poni quod oporteat ad cognitionem veri, talis de quo loquimur, aliquid aliud lumen superinfundi: quia ad hoc verum intelligendum sufficit recipiens speciem intelligendam et faciens speciem esse intelligibilem in actu: et utrumque est per virtutem naturalem ipsius animae rationalis, nisi forte dicatur quod intellectus agens insufficiens est ad hoc; et ita natura humana aliis imperfectior esset, quae non sibi sufficeret in naturalibus operationibus."

30 Donati, *De intellectus*, pp. 109–110: "Praeterea vis illa in homine potissima est, per quam ei beatitudo competit, quando beatitudo naturae intellectualis potissimum bonum et finis existit. Competat vero sibi per id oportet quod sibi peculiare et proprium est. Peculiare autem homini aut proprium, appetitus minime est. In cunctis enim reperitur, quando cuncta pro suae naturae captu in bonum tendant. Intellectus vero naturae intellectuali simpliciter et maxime proprius est, quando solus ei insit, perque eum a reliquis distinguatur, quia voluntas qua est appetitus naturae intellectualis haud propria existat, sed qua ab intellectu dependat." Compare Salviati's concern regarding the confusion between the appetite and the will in *Fridericus*, p. 175. This passage is quoted and discussed in Chapter Six, n. 31 above. Compare also Vincenzo Bandello's reaction to Ficino's letter in his *Opusculum*, p. 249, quoted and discussed in Chapter Six, n. 32 above, together with the relevant passage in Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 208.

finis existit). As in the case of Ficino's letter, in Donati's case, where the scholastic distinction between the present life (*in via*) and the afterlife (*in patria*) and the parallel distinction between worldly happiness (*felicitas*) and divine happiness (*beatitudo*) are not presented, we would have, in terms of contemporary scholastic thinking, an admixture of nature and super-nature, human and divine: an unacceptable situation for a scholastic thinker.³¹

But a closer look at Donati's treatise reveals an important difference between his text and Ficino's: it seems that Donati, to some extent, is more willing to embrace, not always in a fully consistent way, certain philosophical terms, expressions, and modes of thought which can be classified as 'scholastic'. While in the third argument just referred to in n. 30 we had expressions like *sibi peculiare et proprium est, pro suae naturae captu*, or *simpliciter et maxime proprius est*, we shall have in the next arguments some more examples of this tendency.

The next two arguments are focused on the superiority of the intellect's operation, i.e. speculation (*speculatio*), and its object, i.e. worldly happiness (*felicitas*).³² In the fourth argument Donati claims that the most perfect operation is self-sufficient, and it does not require external matter, as fabrication does.³³

In the beginning of the sixth argument we have an echo of Ficino's letter to Donati concerning the different powers of the individual soul.³⁴ We also have here the first explicit reference to Scripture.³⁵

31 On the terms *foelicitas* and *beatitudo* see Celano, 'Act of the Intellect or Act of the Will: The Critical Reception of Aristotle's Ideal of Human Perfection in the 13th and Early 14th Centuries', pp. 93–119.

32 Donati, *De intellectus*, p. 110.

33 *Ibid.*: "Haec [operatio=speculatio] maxime sufficiens iure habetur; haud enim externa eget materia, ut fabricatio..." Compare this with one of the condemned 1277 theses in Piché with Lafleur (eds.), *La condamnation*, p. 110: "103 (109). Quod forma quam oportet fieri et esse in materia non potest agi ab illo quod non agit ex materia."

34 *Ibid.*: "Quod qui dubitat haud mentis compos est." See Ficino, *Opera*, vol. 1, p. 717: "... quis nam modo rationis compos sit, ambigat?" It is perhaps important to point out that Ficino in this letter presents what he regards as Plato's opinion regarding the powers of the soul, in which *ratio* is considered as unique to man, while the other two powers, *ira* and *libido* are not: "Nempe in bestiis cum sit ira, nulla est ratio... Cum vero tam ira, quam libido a ratione different, libido tamen magis ira videtur a rationis dignitate discedere..." Compare with the citations from Thomas in nn. 6 and 7 above.

35 *Ibid.*: "Praesertim quando Christus, veritas ipsa, his verbis apertissime doceat. 'Vita', inquit, 'aeterna est, ut cognoscamus te solum deum, quia solus pater sufficit nobis' [John 17, 3; John 5, 20, with variations]."

In the seventh argument Donati discusses the intellect's virtue, i.e. wisdom, which he defines as "the knowledge of human and divine matters", and which is the only means of tasting "the sweetness of supreme happiness even during this present life".³⁶ We may note that here Donati does relate the present life (*haec vita*) to worldly happiness (*felicitas*), but the emphatic expression "even (*vel*) during this present life" is again an indication of his awareness of confusing worldly happiness with divine happiness (*beatitudo*), or at least of his awareness that there is a tension here with regard to the basic Christian dogma of supernatural grace. After another reference to Scripture, Donati clearly presents wisdom as essential for the relation between man and God, and even as that which grants man, a mortal animal, immortality.³⁷ Obviously, such a notion of wisdom is strongly connected to religion and theology.

Donati's discussion of *sapientia* in the last argument is to some extent close to Ficino's notion of *docta religio* presented in his *De Christiana religione* (1474) and contrasted to what he regarded as the contemporary decline of Christianity.³⁸ But we should notice that Ficino is discussing wisdom as such and not as the intellect's virtue, and that in his discussion there is an essential distinction between human wisdom and divine wisdom, upon which Christianity is founded.³⁹ Donati's argument here is thus closer to one of the condemned theses of 1277.⁴⁰ It should remind us of the need for a detailed

36 *Ibid.*: "Rursus virtus ea nobilissima est in homine, cuius actus reliquorum nobilissimus perhibetur. Hic autem est sapientia, humanorum divinarumque cognitio. Haec enim sola est per quam vel in hac vita supernae felicitatis dulcedinem degustamus."

37 *Ibid.*: "Hinc illud: 'beatus vir qui in sapientia moratur' [Ecclesiasticus 14, 22]. Haec nos deo familiares et amicissimos facit, quando sapientia est infinitus hominibus thesaurus, quo qui bene usi sint, amicitiae dei haud immunes evaserint. Haec hominem mortale animal immortalitati donat."

38 Ficino, *Opera*, vol. 1, p. 1: "Quanta denique et quam vera doctrina in priscis Christianorum episcopis, presbyterisque quis nesciat? O felicia secula, quae divinam hanc sapientiae, religionisque copulam, praesertim apud Hebraeos, Christianosque integram servavistis. O secula tandem nimium infelicia, quando Palladis, Themidisque (id est, sapientiae et honestatis) et separatio divortium miserabile contigit. Proh nephas, sic datum est sanctum canibus lacerandum."

39 *Ibid.*, p. 8: "Si Christiana religio haud quaquam fundata fuit in potentia, vel sapientia humana, vel voluntate, imo vero invitis et contra nitentibus passim multis potentibus, doctisque viris, et humanis oblectamentis, tam subito exorta est, tam repente per univsum orbem propagata."

40 Piché with Lafleur (eds.), *La condamnation*, p. 126: "157 (171). Quod homo ordinatus quantum ad intellectum et affectum, sicut potest sufficienter esse per virtutes intellectuales et alias morales de quibus loquitur philosophus in ethicis, est sufficienter dispositus ad felicitatem eternam."

study of the status of these theses two hundred years after Tempier's condemnation. From what we have seen so far we can say that this condemnation does not hold much authority for Donati. This is also how another contemporary humanist philosopher, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, regarded this condemnation in his *Apologia* (1487):

Secondly, as is certain, and those Parisians [Doctors] themselves admit, these articles do not oblige all believers nor are we obligated to believe in them, except to the extent that they rely on Holy Scripture or on the decisions of the universal Church. Whence the English are accustomed to say that these articles do not cross the sea; therefore we can also say—if it is allowed to joke about such a serious issue—that these articles do not cross the Alps. Wherefore though my conclusion is against the article, let those who condemned me remember that they were entirely mistaken in my condemnation, because they said that my conclusion was against the Apostles' Creed, when they should have said that my conclusion was against the Parisian creed, although also this is a lie as we have demonstrated before.⁴¹

Apparently, this joke regarding the Parisian articles became already a commonplace in contemporary discussions.⁴²

41 Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Opera omnia*, p. 130; I am citing from the critical edition by Fornaciari (ed.), *Apologia*, pp. 48–50: “Secundo quod certum est et ipsi etiam Parisienses hoc fatentur quod illi articuli non obligant omnes fideles nec tenemur illis credere nisi in quantum Scripturae sacrae innituntur, aut determinationibus universalis Ecclesiae. Unde solent dicere Anglici quod illi articuli non transeunt mare quare et nos si in re tam gravi licet iocari, possumus dicere quod non transeunt Alpes. Quare et si conclusio mea esset contra articulum meminerint qui me damnabant quod omnino in me damnando errabant quia dicebant quod conclusio mea erat contra symbolum apostolicum, cum debuissent dicere quod erat contra symbolum parisinum, quanquam et hoc est falsum ut prius ostendimus.”

42 See, for instance, in Giorgio Benigno Salviati's *De natura angelica* (1499) III, 7: “Multae ponuntur evasiones Parisiensium articulorum. Quidam enim, ut Britanni sive Angli, dicunt illam excommunicationem non transire mare, hoc est non se extendi extra dyocesim parisinam. Alii vero quod non transeunt alpes”; IX, 5: “Anathema parisinum dicunt Angli non transire mare (ipsi enim dividuntur a Gallis Oceano mari), et Itali aiunt not transire alpes. Hoc est non transit dyocesim parisinam.” These examples are cited in Dionisotti, ‘Umanisti dimenticati?’, p. 296. Regarding the status of 1277 condemnation see also the studies in Jan A. Aertsen, Kent Emery, Jr. and Andreas Speer (eds.), *Nach der Verurteilung von 1277. Philosophie und Theologie an der Universität von Paris im letzten Viertel des 13. Jahrhunderts. Studien und Texte* (Berlin 2001).

But let us return to Donati. Next, following Aristotle's discussion of the common internal sense, he presents a logical argument according to which, if an object of a power is included in another object of another power, the latter power is superior to the former power,⁴³ and thus:

Indeed, who will deny that the object of the intellect, that is being qua being, includes the object of the will, that is the good? Since, although neither being nor the good could be properly defined, yet if it should be defined, the good would be defined according to being and not being according to the good, because nothing is missing from the account of being itself, which contains everything.⁴⁴

Although he is not entirely happy with the use of definitions in this context, Donati is still willing to present it as another argument concerning the superiority of the intellect. With regard to the expression *ens est quatenus ens*, it reflects typical scholastic logic and *formulae* coming from the methodological discussion concerning the object of the intellect and the subject of metaphysics. In these discussions we find the distinction between *reduplicative* and *specificative*, the first representing a weaker and a more general manner, the latter a more specific and defined way.⁴⁵ Thus, the word *quatenus* here should

43 Donati, *De intellectus*, p. 110: "Vis illa proculdubio alteri praestat, cuius alterum alterius includit objectum, non autem contra. Hinc Aristoteles [*De anima* 425a27–b11 and 428b22–30; *De sensu* 442b4–10; *De memoria* 450a9–12] probat internum illum sensum qui communis dicitur reliquis externis praestantior, quoniam sensibile huius objectum, colorem visus et sonum auditus objecta comprehendit." But notice that in none of this places in Aristotle is the *sensus communis* taken to be *praestantior*.

44 *Ibid.*, pp. 110–111: "Quis vero negaverit intellectus objectum quod ens est quatenus ens, voluntatis objectum quod bonum est includere? Nam licet neque ens neque bonum diffiniri proprie possit, tamen si diffiniendum esset, non ens per bonum, sed bonum per ens diffiniretur, quando entis ipsius rationem comprehendentis omnia haud quicquam devitet." Compare the citation from Scotus in n. 13 and context. For the identification of the object of the intellect with being see e.g., Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a, q. 5, a. 2: "Unde ens est proprium objectum intellectus, et sic est primum intelligibile, sicut sonus est primum audibile." But this view was criticized by Francis of Marchia for instance, in his *Commentarius*, pp. 331–332: "Ex hiis infero corrolarium: quod primum obiectum intellectus nostri via genetacionis, in ordine universalium, non est ens simpliciter, ut aliqui dicunt, nec species specialissima, ut dicunt alii, set est genus subalternum, correspondens primo individuo sensato, puta color in visu et sonus in auditu."

45 See, e.g., John Buridan, *In metaphysices Aristotelis* lib. III, q. V, Fo. XVI: "Ad primam questionem potest dici quod non est propria locutio saltem vera; dicere quod ens in quantum ens sit subiectum proprium in metaphysica quia virtute reduplicationis sequeretur quod

be understood *reduplicative*, and so, the object of the intellect according to Donati is being in general, i.e., all being (and not being qua being taken in a *specificative* sense, which is the object of metaphysics). This becomes very clear from the last sentence of the argument just quoted above, where Donati explains that being includes everything.

In the last two arguments concerning the superiority of the intellect Donati claims, first (in the ninth argument) that the intellect is purer, more genuine and more abstract than the will, and thus it is more noble and perfect. The same goes for its operation: the operation of the intellect is regarded as a movement of a thing towards the intellect, while the will is regarded as totally inferior. Donati is citing here Aristotle's saying, according to which truth and falsehood are in the soul (ἐν διανοίᾳ) while good and evil are in the things (ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν).⁴⁶ Secondly (in the tenth argument) Donati compares the intellect's operation, i.e. attaining the supreme good which is beatitude, with the operations of the will, i.e. desiring, loving, and delighting, each of which has some relation with the end, but none of which attains the end, which is beatitude.⁴⁷ It is interesting to note that in both arguments Donati uses the

omne ens esset ibi subiectum proprium; tum illa locutio sustineretur ad talem sensum quod ens id est iste terminus ens ita quod esset suppositio materialis secundum quod ens id est secundum illam rationem a qua sumitur hoc nomen ens est subiectum proprium in metaphysica itaque illa dictio inquantum non teneretur reduplicative sed specificative vel determinative ita quod poneretur ad specificandum sive ad exprimendum rationem secundum quam iste terminus ens ponitur subiectum proprium huius scientie." For a contemporary fifteenth-century discussion see Gabriel Zerbus, *Questiones metaphysice*, Circa lib. 1, q. 2, "Utrum ens simpliciter sumptum commune quiditati et modo sit scientie metaphysice subiectum primum primitate adequationis, an ens solum commune deo et creature, Propter quattrum, Bononie: Per Johannem de Nordlingen et Henricum de Harlem socios, 1482, f. (not numbered) a10vb." I would like to thank Dr. Marco Forlivesi for his helpful remarks on this issue.

46 Donati, *De intellectus*, p. 111: "Praeterea res quaelibet quo purior, sincerior et abstractior existit eo nobilior est atque perfectior. Ex quo deum purissimum actum peripathetici nuncupant. Qui vero nescit intellectum voluntate puriorem, se quoque vivere nescit, quando eius operatio purior appareat. Est enim intellectio quidam (ut ita dixerim) motus rei ad intellectum; voluntas vero omnino secus est. Hinc illud Aristotelicum [*Metaphysica* 1027b25–28] 'verum et falsum sunt in anima, bonum et malum in rebus.'" On this last point see next note.

47 *Ibid.*: Rursus potentia illa in nobis summa non est, in cuius ulla operatione beatitudo, summi boni adeptio formaliter (ut ita dixerim) nequaquam constat. Voluntatis autem tres actus potissimi sunt, desiderare, inquam, amare et gaudere. Desiderium non finis adeptionem, sed motum potius in finem indicat. Amor etiam qui vel bonum praecedat amatum, vel sequitur (est enim tam rei quae adest, quam quae abest), summi boni, quod

same formula (*ut ita dixerim*) just after using some scholastic phrases (*est enim intellectio quidam* and *summi boni adeptio formaliter*), as though he were apologizing for using such terms. The conclusion of argument ten presents once again an extreme intellectualist position according to which the whole of beatitude is attained by the operation of the intellect, that is understanding.⁴⁸ This is followed by the concluding remarks to the first ten arguments, in which Donati is relying on Aristotle's *Ethics* for identifying human dignity with the intellect, which is also regarded as an essential instrument for man's association with the angels, and his ability to contemplate God and divine matters.⁴⁹ This is of course a Christian and an intellectualist reading of Aristotle.

Just before moving on to present the ten arguments in favour of the will Donati remarks that the first set of arguments in support of the intellect are according to his own judgment most valid arguments.⁵⁰ I see no reason why

est beatitudo, adeptio, nullo pacto existimari potest. Delectatio quoque minime, quae est voluntatis in bono congruo acquisito dulcissima quies, ideoque non finis est, sed finis comes." Compare these last two arguments of Donati with Vincenzo Bandello's critique of Ficino's letter; Bandello, *Opusculum*, pp. 211–212. This passage is quoted and discussed in Chapter Five, n. 72 and context. Ficino's argument is in *Lettere I*, p. 206. For this passage see Chapter Five, n. 73 and context.

48 *Ibid.*: "Reliquum est igitur intellectum voluntate nobiliorem existere, quando in eius operatione quae est intelligere beatitudo integra reperitur." Compare Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros sententiarum*, IV, dist. 49, q. 2, a. 1: "Secundo, quia cum intelligere sit maxime propria operatio hominis, oportet quod secundum eam assignetur sibi sua beatitudo, cum haec operatio in ipso perfecta fuerit"; and Thomas' *Quaestiones disputatae de anima*, q. 5: "Manifestum est enim quod ultima beatitudo sive felicitas hominis consistit in sua nobilissima operatione, quae est intelligere, cuius ultimam perfectionem oportet esse per hoc quod intellectus noster suo activo principio coniungitur."

49 *Ibid.*: "Verum hoc nihil aliud est, quam ipsa mens, quam in 'Moribus' [*Ethica nicomachea* 1177a13–17; 1177b30–31] Aristoteles divinum quiddam et praeclarum appellat, inquiring eam vel hominem omnino esse vel saltem quid in eo potissimum. Ex quo asseruit solum hominem inter caetera animantia felicem esse, quia per intellectum una cum angelis et ipse deum divinaque contempletur." Compare Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 2a–2ae, q. 180, a. 6: "Praeterea, actio contemplativae vitae ad intellectum pertinet, secundum quem homo cum angelis convenit." But Thomas is very cautious in his response to this argument, sharply distinguishing between the human intellect and that of the angels: "Ad secundum dicendum quod homo convenit in intellectu cum angelis in genere, sed vis intellectiva est multo altior in angelo quam in homine. Et ideo alio modo oportet hos motus in hominibus et in angelis assignare, secundum quod diversimode se habent ad uniformitatem." Donati's remark regarding the dignity of man and his status in nature cannot be found in Thomas in this context.

50 *Ibid.*: "Has decem pro intellectu rationes iudicio nostro admodum validas tibi adduximus, quas equidem summo cum labore nec non diligentia commenti sumus."

we should not take this remark seriously. After all, we are not dealing here with a rhetorical exercise only, but rather with a philosophical and a theological discussion which was taken seriously by the author and his friends who participated in the oral debate.⁵¹ If this is indeed the case, a further study is required with regard to the theological context of the intellectualist position among scholastic and humanist thinkers in the last decades of the fifteenth century.

3 Arguments for the Superiority of the Will

It is striking to find at the very beginning of the first argument in support of the will the words *liberior* and *libertas*.⁵² The essential relation between freedom and the will was of course a commonplace among scholastic thinkers, certainly after John Duns Scotus and among the Scotists during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.⁵³ But in Ficino's letter in support of the will to which we have already referred several times this term is not even mentioned. Donati in this opening sentence not only mentions the term freedom, but he also defines it as a faculty of acting or not acting in this or that manner (*libertas enim quae facultas est agendi sic aut non agendi*). This definition, I would contend, already bears a Scotist influence which is not found in Ficino's letter and which represents Donati's greater familiarity with contemporary scholastic discussions.⁵⁴

Freedom is thus inseparable from the will in the Scotistic discussions. Donati contrasts it to seeing, knowing, and understanding, i.e., the powers of the intellect described in the first argument supporting the intellect. Freedom is now the faculty through which a power can be regarded more perfect and be identified with the good. Horace and Aristotle are quoted in support of

51 Doubts regarding the seriousness of such debates were raised by Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation*, pp. 1–18.

52 Donati, *De intellectus*, p. 111: "Potentia quatenus liberior est, eo est perfectior; libertas enim quae facultas est agendi sic aut non agendi, praeclarum bonum est." Compare Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae* II, dist. 25, q. 8, a. 6: "Si enim libertas arbitrii est, bonum quidem est, quia libertas arbitrii bonum naturale est." As we shall see in n. 57 below, this opinion is contrasted to Scotus' sharp distinction between nature and will.

53 On the notion of the will in Scotus and among the Scotists in the fourteenth century see the detailed studies of Alliney and Hoenen mentioned in n. 13 above. For a fifteenth-century Scotist discussion of the will and freedom see Salviati, *Fridericus*.

54 On this see Alliney, 'La contingenza della fruizione beatifica,' p. 639, especially the references to, and discussion of, Scotus' *lectura prima* on pp. 634–645. And see also the citations from Scotus in nn. 13–17 above.

this argument.⁵⁵ But we do not have in Aristotle a clear-cut preference for voluntary over necessary.⁵⁶ Such a clear-cut distinction is basically the product of scholastic philosophy, mainly emphasized by Scotus and developed by his followers in the context of human agency. Thus, when Donati claims that Aristotle prefers a voluntary factor to a natural factor (*Aristoteles . . . agens voluntarium agenti naturali praeponit*) he is in fact following the Scotists in contrasting the will with nature.⁵⁷ It is interesting to find a reference to the same place in Aristotle's *Physics* in both Donati and Scotus (see notes 55 and 57). Donati may have read this passage of Scotus or of some Scotists referring to it. But one should stress the fact that Aristotle's context here is physics and not ethics, and that we only have in Aristotle a distinction (without contrast and preference) between things which are in accordance with intention and those which are not (τὰ μὲν κατὰ προαίρεσιν, τὰ δ' οὐ κατὰ προαίρεσιν), and these things are regarded as falling outside what is necessary (παρὰ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον), but still some of them are done for the sake of something (τὸ ἕνεκά του). Among things which are done for the sake of something, another distinction is introduced, between thought and nature (ἔστι δ' ἕνεκά του ὅσα τε ἀπὸ διανοίας ἂν πραχθεῖη καὶ ὅσα ἀπὸ φύσεως).⁵⁸ All this is very far from the Scotist theory of will and its

55 Donati, *De intellectus*, pp. 111–112: “Hinc Oratianum illud [*Epistulae* I, 10, 39–40] nam ‘qui potiore metallis libertate caret’. Hinc et Aristoteles in eo qui ‘Natura’ inscribitur [*Physica* 196b17–22] ob hoc duntaxat agens voluntarium agenti naturali praeponit.”

56 The problem of the will in Aristotle and in ancient philosophy in general has been the subject of many discussions in recent years. See the references to the detailed discussions of Dihle and Sorabji in n. 4 above.

57 John Duns Scotus, *Lectura* I, dist. 1, p. 2, q. 2; in Balić (ed.), *Ioannis Duns Scoti*, vol. 16, p. 90: “Necessitas naturalis non stat cum libertate voluntatis, quia natura et voluntas sunt principia opposita, ex II *Physicorum* [*Physica* 196b17–22]; sed voluntas libere vult finem, ut probabitur; ergo non necessario vult finem . . . voluntas libere vult ea quae sunt ad finem; si igitur non libere velit finem, igitur non est una potentia respectu finis et respectu eorum quae sunt ad finem, quia haberet oppositos modos principiandi, et ita esset nulla potentia . . .” This is cited also in Alliney, ‘La contingenza della fruizione beatifica,’ p. 635, n. 11.

58 Aristotle, *Physics* 196b17–22: “τῶν δὲ γιγνομένων τὰ μὲν ἕνεκά του γίγνεται τὰ δ' οὐ (τούτων δὲ τὰ μὲν κατὰ προαίρεσιν, τὰ δ' οὐ κατὰ προαίρεσιν, ἄμφω δ' ἐν τοῖς ἕνεκά του), ὥστε ὅλον ὅτι καὶ ἐν τοῖς παρὰ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον καὶ τὸ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ ἔστιν ἕνια περὶ ἃ ἐνδέχεται ὑπάρχειν τὸ ἕνεκά του. ἔστι δ' ἕνεκά του ὅσα τε ἀπὸ διανοίας ἂν πραχθεῖη καὶ ὅσα ἀπὸ φύσεως.” We do not have any sign of the will in the Latin translation of this passage either; see *Physica, Translatio Vetus*, eds. Fernand Bossier and Jozef Brams (Leiden 1990), VII 1, p. 68: “Eorum autem quae fiunt alia quidem propter hoc fiunt, alia vero non; horum autem alia quidem secundum propositum, alia vero non secundum propositum, ambo autem in his quae sunt propter hoc; quare manifestum est quoniam et in his quae sunt secundum necessitatem et

implications in moral psychology, ethics, theology, and metaphysics, of which we have an echo in Donati's first argument in support of the will.

Donati continues, using typical Scotist rhetoric:

Indeed, who will deny, unless he is mad, that freedom should be ascribed only to the will which moves everything, while the rest of the faculties exercise their own operations according to the will's command?⁵⁹

Donati sketches an epistemological process which is completely dependent upon the will: first the intellect gently understands at least something, then the will directs it towards matters which should be perfectly understood, and determines those matters which should not be considered. Many times, Donati claims, the will restricts the intellect which tends to regard false matters as if they were true; the will devises reasons through which it would be possible to examine these matters. Thus, this epistemological process reveals the great servitude of the intellect and the endless freedom of the will.⁶⁰ It is exactly at

in eo quod est sicut frequenter sint quedam circa que contingit esse que est propter hoc. Sunt autem propter hoc quecumque ab intellectu utique agentur et quecumque a natura." Notice the last distinction in the Latin, between the intellect and nature, which is totally different from the Scotist distinction between nature (including the intellect) and will.

59 Donati, *De intellectus*, p. 112: "Quis vero negabit nisi demens libertatem voluntati cuncta moventi tantum esse ascribendam, cum eius nutu reliquae vires suas exerceant operationes?" Compare Salvati, *Fridericus*, p. 178: "Mens igitur et omnes vires commissae sunt voluntatis nutibus; eius vero nutus Dei maiorumque nutibus obtemperare debent. Inventi itaque voluntatem subiici voluntati; at voluntatem non voluntati subdi aut subesse, est impossibile." We can find in Thomas the relation between self-movement, liberty, and free choice, but without involving the will, and with a clear Aristotelian emphasis on cognition, intellectual judgement, and causes; see, e.g., in his *Summa contra gentiles*, II, 48: "Quod enim arbitrio agant, manifestum est: eo quod per cognitionem intellectivum iudicium habent de operandis. Libertatem autem necesse est eas habere, si habent dominium sui actus... Quod ergo non est sibi causa agendi, non est liberum in agendo. Quaecumque autem non moventur neque agunt nisi ab aliis mota, non sunt sibi ipsi causa agendi. Sola ergo moventia se ipsa libertatem in agendo habent." Liberty, will, and self-movement are all present in Thomas' *Scriptum super libros sententiarum*, III, dist. 17, q. 1, a. 1: "... quia natura in homine non ducit sicut in aliis, sed ducitur; unde oportet homini libertatem inesse in suo motu, et hoc est voluntatis." This is still not satisfactory enough for the Scotist position.

60 *Ibid.*: "Prius enim intellectus aliquid remisse saltem intelligit; deinde voluntas eum determinat ad quaedam perfecte intelligenda, quaedam vero nullo modo cogitanda; nec non saepissime intellectum cogit uti falsa pro veris accipiat rationesque comminiscatur, quibus ea tueri valeat. Ex quo magna ipsius intellectus servitus apparet, maximaque

this point that we find the first mention of Thomas Aquinas. It is urgent for Donati to explain that Thomas, who is of course the main authority among the Dominican ‘intellectualists’, did not mean that reason or the intellect bring about freedom in reality (*re vera*), but only emphasized that *ratio* precedes *libertas* on the logical and epistemological level,⁶¹ as shown in the epistemological process outlined above.

In the second argument we find a clear echo of Ficino’s letter. The criterion presented here for a superior power is that the operation of which can never be wrongly used or misused. This is of course love (*amor*), the operation of the will, which is regarded as essential for the proper relation between man and God, partly due to the weakness of the human intellect and to human arrogance. Thus, *cognitio* and *scientia* are contrasted to *caritas* and *bonitas*.⁶²

The third argument is a response to arguments eight and nine in support of the intellect, where being and truth were regarded as superior to the good. The object of a power is here the criterion of its superiority, and so the good which is the will’s object is regarded as more noble than the intellect’s object, i.e. the truth.⁶³ No further reason is presented here since, apparently, Donati

voluntatis libertas.” Compare this with the citation from Scotus in n. 14 above, and with Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros sententiarum*, III, dist. 23, q. 2, a. 2: “Tertio modo consideratur intellectus in ordine ad voluntatem, quae quidem omnes vires animae ad actus suos movet. Et haec quidem voluntas determinat intellectum ad aliquid quod neque per se ipsum videtur, neque ad ea quae per se videntur resolvi potest, posse determinat, ex hoc quod dignum reputat illi esse adhaerendum propter aliquam rationem qua bonum videtur et adhaerere . . .”

- 61 *Ibid.*: “Et cum divus Aquinas, vir immortalitate dignus, rationem libertatem efficere dicit, non quia revera efficiat, sed quia praecedit, intellexit.” Compare with Thomas’ citation in n. 7 above. I could not find such a formulation in Thomas.
- 62 *Ibid.*: “Insuper vis illa cuius operatione nemo abutitur proculdubio potior est ea cuius operatione quis abuti potest. Prima est amor, quo male uti non possumus; vere enim deum amamus vel imperfecte cognitum, quando cuncta propter eum mens humana despicit. Altera est cognitio qua perperam quis uti valet. Hinc divus Paulus [I Corinthians 8, 1]: ‘Scientia inflat, Charitas aedificat’. Quare hominibus praestat studere potius ut boni sint quam ut docti, quia nobis utilior bonitas est et deo gratior quam scientia ac stabilior est.” Compare Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 205: “Secunda: quemadmodum deterius est odisse Deum quam ignorare, sic melius amare quam nosse. Tertia: cognitione Dei possumus male uti, scilicet ad superbiam, amore eius male uti non possumus.”
- 63 *Ibid.*: “Rursus nemo dubitat vim illam praestantissimam esse, cuius objectum praestantissimum est; praestantissima enim potentia praestantissimum exigit objectum. Hinc visus auditui praestat, quando color praestantior sono repperiatur. Quis autem ambigit voluntatis objectum (quod bonum est) mentis objecto (quod est verum) nobilius existere?” Compare this with the citation from Scotus in n. 13 above.

dedicated a book to the nature, quality, and perfection of the good according to the Platonists.⁶⁴ We know nothing of such a book by Donati.

In the fourth argument, we come across the term *imperium*: according to a common opinion the power of commanding should be given to that which is more noble.⁶⁵ We have here also for the first and only time in this treatise the phrase *voluntatis arbitrium*, which is regarded as the driving force of the intellect, through which the intellect invests itself in investigating matters and speculating about them.⁶⁶ We notice that the term *liberum arbitrium*, free choice or free will, one of the most central terms in the debates concerning the intellect and the will, is not mentioned or discussed at all by Donati.

An activity which is desirable for its own sake is presented in argument five as the criterion for the more noble power.⁶⁷ Thus, Donati contrasts *gaudium*, the operation of the will, with *visio*, the operation of the intellect.⁶⁸

64 *Ibid.*: “de quo nunc latius pertractare haud animus est, quoniam de boni ingenio, proprietate et perfectione ad Laurentium Medices iuniorem delicias nostras librum ex platoniorum mente conscripsimus.”

65 *Ibid.*: “Praeterea omnium una et certa sententia est, nobiliori imperium iure concedi.” This common opinion is a commonplace in classical literature but terms presenting political power were also popular in the discussions of the intellect and the will. See, for instance, the title of Salvinati’s dialogue *Fridericus, de animae regni principe*, and the argument on p. 180: “Est itaque non princeps huius regni intellectus, sed speculator quidam, qui imperatori exercitus quid amici, quidve hostes moliantur insinuat,—atque nuntius quidam voluntatis dici potest.” See also Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 278: “Ex quibus patet intellectum simpliciter et per se esse voluntate nobiliorem, voluntatem vero ipso intellectu nobiliorem esse secundum quid et per accidens. Et si voluntas dicatur domina et regina, ipse intellectus rex est et imperator. Eius enim est dirigere et omnem actum voluntatis in debitum finem ordinare. Insuper et omnem actum voluntatis necesse est aliquem actum intellectus praecedere. Est tamen aliquis actus intellectus qui nullum actum voluntatis praesupponit. In tantum etiam est actus voluntatis rector et melior, quando est rationi rectae magis conformis. In actu ergo intellectus qui imperium et principatum inter potentias animae obtinet, et non in actu voluntatis, quae ab ipso regitur consistit essentialiter ultima foelicitas. Quod in principio me probaturum pollicebar.” Compare this with the citation from Thomas in n. 9 above.

66 *Ibid.*, pp. 112–113: “Pro voluntatis enim arbitrio intellectus rerum indagini speculationive incumbit, ab eisque desistit.”

67 *Ibid.* p. 113: “Item non equidem alienum a ratione alicui videri debet, vim eam cuius actus per se ipsum dumtaxat appetitur, altera nobiliorem existere, cuius actus per aliud appetitur.” Compare with the second argument in support of the intellect cited and discussed in n. 27 and context.

68 *Ibid.*: “Gaudium vero quod est voluntatis operatio ita per se quaeritur, ut causam ob quam velimus gaudere aliam praeter ipsummet gaudium afferre non valeamus. Visio autem, intellectus operatio, sui gratia tantum haud petitur, quoniam ratio afferri possit ob

In the sixth argument another common opinion of learned men (the origins of which can be traced back to Aristotle, *De caelo* 295a2–4, 301a20–22, 302b5–8) is presented: it is better to be moved by a natural movement and by one's own movement, which is also regarded as internal, than by a violent, a foreign, or an external movement.⁶⁹ Then, Donati presents an analogy between the soul, which is more noble than the body because it grants the body its movement. (The origins of this idea can be traced back to Aristotle, *De motu animalium* 700b6–11), and the will, which is regarded as the self-moving driving force of the intellect, directing itself towards intellectual and sensual powers.⁷⁰ Here we encounter a crucial difference between Donati and the Scotists: while the Scotists, as has already been noted, contrasted the will with nature or with natural powers, Donati has no problem in comparing the will with *naturalis et proprius motus*. The only explicit authority mentioned here for the idea of the will as the source of all movement is Thomas.⁷¹

Thus we have here only a partial acceptance of the Scotist position regarding the will. Donati accepts the importance of freedom in defending the superiority of the will, but he does not mention *liberum arbitrium*, nor does he contrast the will with nature. On the other hand, he follows the Scotists' device of using

quam videre velimus, quia visio sola absque gaudio desiderio nostro minime facit." Compare Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 206: "... vis autem amoris in unione, proprius unimur Deo per amatorium gaudium ... et sicut non qui videt bonum, sed qui vult fit bonus, sic animus non ex eo quod Deum considerat, sed ex eo quod amat fit divinus"; Bandello, *Opusculum*, p. 259: "Nec animus noster per gaudium magis divinus fit quam per visionem."

69 *Ibid.*: "Praeterea communis est doctorum hominum opinio perfectius esse ex se moveri quam ex alio. Praestat enim naturali et proprio motu moveri, quam violento vel alieno. Quin immo, is tantum proprie motus dicitur, qui intrinsecus est." This Aristotelian principle can be found in *De caelo* 301a20–22.

70 *Ibid.*: "Hinc et animam corpore nobiliorem asserimus, quae non modo sibi, verum et corpori motum praebet. Sed quis dubitat intellectum a voluntate moveri, ipsam autem a nulla alia vi, quando ad intellectuales sensualesque vires ita se habeat, uti cor ad animalis membra?" For the last image compare Salviati, *Fridericus*, p. 182: "Unde et Salvator exprobravit incredulitatem Apostolorum et duritiam cordis, hoc est voluntatis. Et euntibus in Emmaus, *O stulti*—ait—*et tardi corde ad credendum*. Sed in sacra Scriptura 'cordis' nomine voluntas intelligitur. Fidei igitur actus a voluntatis iussu magna in parte dependet." And see Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a–2ae, q. 56, a. 3: "Contingit autem intellectum a voluntate moveri, sicut et alias potentiae; considerat enim aliquis aliquid actu eo quod vult. Et ideo intellectus, secundum quod habet ordinem ad voluntatem, potest esse subjectum virtutis simpliciter dictae."

71 *Ibid.*: "Ex quo saepius divus noster Aquinas [*Summa theologiae* 1a–2ae q. 9, a. 1; q. 10, a. 2; q. 79, a. 2; q. 81, a. 1] repetit radicem motionis omnis fontem et originem voluntatem esse."

also the Angelic Doctor as an authority in their discussions of the will.⁷² We should keep in mind that Donati's aim is not to prove the superiority of either the intellect or the will, but rather to demonstrate the importance of both as the most important faculties in the human soul, as explicitly implied in the title of his treatise.

By the end of the sixth argument Donati discusses what he regards as a false syllogism: it does not follow that if the intellect apprehends the purpose which moves the will, that the intellect is itself either the will's purpose or that it moves the will. He points out that although the intellect should first know the end, by which the will is moved, it is not because of the act of understanding itself but rather because of the end that the understanding is moved. Therefore the conclusion here is that the will is superior to the intellect on account of its movement.⁷³ This part of the argument corresponds to argument eight in support of the intellect: in both cases Donati is willing to use 'scholastic' methods like definitions and syllogisms in order to prove his point.

In the beginning of argument seven we have a typical humanistic remark, in which Donati admits to preferring Plato to Aristotle.⁷⁴ But in fact, as we have already seen and as is also evident in this argument (where we find the only reference to Plato), Donati's treatise is full of explicit and implicit references to Aristotle. The main line of this argument taken from Aristotle is that priority in time does not imply priority in substance but quite the opposite: in nature we find progression from a modest beginning of imperfect and incomplete things

72 Compare Salviati, *Fridericus*, pp. 168 and 175. These passages are quoted and discussed in Chapter Six, nn. 19 and 31 and contexts.

73 Donati, *De intellectus*, p. 113: "Neque quis obiiciat: intellectus apprehendit finem qui voluntatem movet, igitur est vel voluntatis finis vel eam movet. Quoniam non sequitur, video Socratem qui Platonem movet, ergo Platonem moveo. Et quanquam opus sit intellectum prius finem nosse, quam ab eo voluntatem moveri, non ideo tamen ipsa intellectione sed fine intellectio movetur. Concludatur itaque voluntatem ratione motus intellectu potiorum existeret." See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 2a–2ae, q. 2, a. 2: "Si vero consideretur tertio modo objectum fidei, secundum quod intellectus est motus a voluntate, sic ponitur actus fidei credere in Deum; veritas enim prima ad voluntatem refertur secundum quod habet rationem finis."

74 *Ibid.*: "Aristotelis philosophorum omnium facile principis (Platonem semper excipio) in eo qui 'De divinis' inscribitur [*Metaphysica* 1050a4–10] sententia est: 'ea quae priora sunt origine, dignitate posteriora existeret.'" On the Plato-Aristotle controversy see Monfassani, 'Marsilio Ficino and the Plato-Aristotle Controversy', in Allen, Rees and Davies (eds.), *Marsilio Ficino: His Theology, His Philosophy, His Legacy*, pp. 179–202.

towards perfect and complete things.⁷⁵ Varro and Plato are mentioned as the authorities for a methodological remark according to which harmonious presentation of examples is the most outstanding form of instruction. This remark is indeed followed by two examples from nature: leaves are prior in time to flowers and flowers to fruits, but with regard to their importance it is the opposite order: fruits, flowers, leaves. The same goes for the human offspring, in which we notice a progression from the vegetative towards the sensual, and finally towards the intellectual life. All this shows, Donati claims, that although the will is posterior to the intellect in nature, it is prior in its importance.⁷⁶

In the eighth argument Donati returns to the theme of the 'dignity of man', this time claiming in a rather personal tone that he believes that the noblest power in the human soul is that to which God, Whose wisdom is endless and Who cannot err, gave the responsibility to take care of all the other powers. This power is of course the will, our queen who moves, chooses, and commands all matters.⁷⁷ The personal tone expressed by the word *credo* right at the beginning of the argument may reflect Donati's own preference for this argument. We may also note the emphasis on the divine origin of the will's superiority. The will is related to the very essence of man:

And it is indeed not wrong [to say] that only through this will man would be rewarded and would sin. Since if you take away the will, you find in us nothing worthy of either praise or disgrace. Through this [will] we are

75 *Ibid.*: "Natura enim ab imperfectis inconsummatisque exorditur, et in integra absolutaue progreditur."

76 *Ibid.*: "Nam, ut Romanorum doctissimus Varro, praestantissimum, ait, docendi genus est exemplorum congrua adductio; quod et antea divus Plato noster in 'Regno' tetigerat. Videmus in arboribus folia flores, hos poma praecedere. At qui nescit poma floribus et flores foliis praestantiores? Videmus et fetum humanum in utero, primo vegetali, deinde sensuali, et demum intellectuallivivere vita. Quem tamen vero hominum latet vitam intellectus sensualem, et hanc vegetalem excedere, se quoque lateat necesse est. Sequitur igitur voluntatem natura post intellectum nobilitate eundum antecellere." Notice that the words *adductio* and *vegetalis* are not classical. Compare the last sentence with the citation from Thomas in n. 7 above.

77 *Ibid.*, pp. 113–114: "Credo equidem vim illam in nobis nobilitatis fastigium tenere, cui deus (qui omnia fortiter regit suaviterque disponit) cunctarum animae virium curam credidit. Nam quis adeo demens dubitat id in homine nobilissimum existere, cui deus, cuius sapientiae non est numerus, cui natura quae nihil frustra operatur, nostri custodiam demandaverit? Quid autem hoc sit praeter voluntatem, repperies nihil. Haec enim nostra regina est, haec movet haec eligit, haec imperat." Compare with notes 9 and 65 above.

praised, blamed, exalted; because only thanks to this [will], or at least mainly thanks to it, man exists.⁷⁸

Matters theological and ethical, as well as the existence of man, are all mainly dependent upon the will. On this point Donati is again very close to the Scotists.

In the penultimate argument Donati returns to the Aristotelian idea of *sensus communis* which we have seen in argument eight in support of the intellect. The criterion presented here for a superiority of something is self-existence, i.e., things which hold the principle of their own existence in themselves and are not dependent upon some external principle. Such things are regarded as more perfect, since their end is regarded as more noble.⁷⁹ The example given is the five external senses, which are inferior to the internal common sense since they are dependent upon this internal sense for their perfection.⁸⁰ This is compared with the intellect, which is in fact or in reality (*re vera*) inferior to the will, and, though it precedes the will, it is still dependent upon the will which is the queen of the whole of our soul.⁸¹

In the last argument in support of the will, Donati presents the relation between the will and *caritas*: from the will, which is the supreme power, arises the supreme virtue, which is *caritas*.⁸² The rest of this argument contains a praise of both the will and *caritas*.⁸³

78 *Ibid.*, p. 114: "Nec id sane iniuria, quando per eam [voluntatem] tantum homo mereatur et peccet. Tolle enim voluntatem, et nulla in nobis offendet vel laude vel vitio digna. Hac laudamur, hac vituperamur, hac attollimur; quoniam per hanc solam vel saltem maxime homo existat." Compare this with the citation from Thomas in n. 9 above.

79 *Ibid.*: "Quaecumque ordinem ad aliud habere reperiuntur, eo ignobiliora existere necesse est. Absoluta enim et per se existentia his proculdubio perfectiora arbitramur, vel quae simpliciter et per se existere minime possunt. Propterea finis omnibus quae in eum tendunt nobilior existimatur."

80 *Ibid.*: "Hinc et sensus quinque externi sensu illo interno qui communis dicitur ignobiliores habentur, quando ad illum uti imperfectius ad perfectius referuntur."

81 *Ibid.*: "Ex quo apparet quod venamur, intellectum, inquam, excellentia voluntate inferiorem re vera esse, cum quia praecedat ipsam (invisa enim diligere possumus, incognita nequaquam) [on this see n. 27], tum quia ex ea ut pote totius animae regina maxime dependeat." We have encountered this image in notes 9, 65, and 77 above.

82 *Ibid.*: "Nos certe hactenus multi fuimus in voluntatis nobilitate declaranda, quae re vera unico poterat exprimi verbo, si charitatem, virtutem omnium maximam immo solam, a voluntate prodeuntem in medium adduxerimus. Quis enim ambigit vim illam praestantioris a qua praestantior emanat virtus? quoniam potior natura potioris producit effectum."

83 *Ibid.*: "O praeclarem igitur voluntatem! solem e mundo tollere videntur, qui tibi tuam detrahunt excellentiam, quando ex te prodierit praeclarissima charitatis virtus; virtus

4 Donati's Concluding Remarks

Donati opens his concluding remarks by emphasizing that he has discussed the excellence of humankind, which is the excellence of the mind or of the intellect and of the will.⁸⁴ These faculties of the soul are contrasted with *inanimatae suppellectilis possessio*, because of which proper and true goods are neglected, and many people most unfortunately hold temporary things, which are not really their own, as more important than their innate faculties.⁸⁵ The final accord of the treatise is focused on the supernatural divine light upon which human dignity depends, and here it is contrasted even with the worldly powers which stood at the centre of the whole discussion, i.e. the intellect and the will, as part of an elegant rhetorical self-reference and critical account of the author regarding his own work.⁸⁶

But what is the relation between Donati's three different accounts of human dignity? In other words, what is the relation between self-reflexivity or self-consciousness, the intellect, and the will? Self-reflexivity becomes both the condition through which man can make use of his best powers—the intellect and the will—and the instrument through which man becomes closer to God; thus, it is essential to theology and ethics. In Donati's text there is a tension between two conflicting tendencies: on the one hand, to show the excellence of both the intellect and the will, and on the other, to show which

inquam illa, quae sola est virtus, et sine qua nulla. O charitatem virtutum maximam, quanta est potestas tua!"

84 *Ibid.*: "Videmus itaque, optime pater, vidimus, annuente deo, humani generis excellentiam, quando mentis et voluntatis excellentiam vidimus."

85 *Ibid.*: "Ex quo errorem quorundam, ne dixerim insaniam, non parum admodum doleo (homo enim sum, nihil a me humanum alienum puto) qui dum inanimatae suppellectilis possessione splendere posse sibi persuadent, posthabitis propriis et veris bonis, aliena et fugacia infelicissime prensant."

86 *Ibid.*, pp. 114–115: "At nunquam nostra esse fortuna faciet quae natura fecit aliena, quae non eo inficias et conditoris opera et sui distinctione postremae aliquid pulchritudinis trahere; infra tamen humanam excellentiam collocata, admirationem nostram nullo pacto merebantur. Nec caeci intelligimus quanta conditionem nostrum iniuria afficiamus. Ille vero genus humanum terrenis opibus praestare voluit, nos autem dignitatem nostram infra infima quaeque deijcimus. Cum enim vilissima rerum nostra bona putamus eisdem nosmet ipsos iudicio nostro misere heu summictimus. Surgamus igitur, eia surgamus, nox praecesserit, dies autem appropinquaverit, induamus quae so arma lucis, abijciamus opera tenebrarum, ut honeste in dies ambulemus [Romans 13, 12–13]. Nam quicquid placet excitatque nos, haud mentis illustrat aciem, cum id infimis tellus abluat cavernis. Splendor vero quo regitur vigetque coelum Vitat obscuras animae ruinas, Cuius si poterimus gustare lucem Candidos solis radios negabimus."

of these powers in the human soul should be regarded as better or stronger. But Donati's contribution to the discussion of this issue is in presenting self-reflexivity as the key for the proper use of the powers in the human soul, including both intellect and will. It is evident that Donati shows here greater awareness of the rich scholastic tradition than his teacher Ficino regarding the philosophical and psychological complexities of the intellect/will debate which had originated in the scholastic schools. In this regard, perhaps, he was more a student of Giorgio Antonio Vespucchi, an important figure in Florentine intellectual history who joined the Dominicans at San Marco under the influence of Savonarola during the 1490s. Because of his untimely death, Donati cannot be regarded as a major influential figure; but nonetheless his importance lies in the fact that he somehow bridged the gap between a humanist-oriented thinker like Ficino, and some contemporary scholastic thinkers like Vincenzo Bandello and Giorgio Benigno Salviati.

While Bandello—as we have seen in Chapter Five—expressed some difficulties concerning the way Ficino had employed the concept of love (*amor*) in his letter, we shall discuss now, in the next and last chapter, the contributions of yet another scholastic thinker—Lorenzo Pisano—to moral psychology through his account of the concept of love. This is yet another piece of evidence which shows intellectual diversity among different scholastic thinkers in late-*Quattrocento* Florence.

A Renaissance Discourse on Love

1 'Scholasticism' and 'Humanism': Terms in Transition

Paul Oskar Kristeller's 1944 seminal study of the scholastic background of Marsilio Ficino is one of the first instances in which a modern scholar sought to contextualise a Renaissance thinker, thereby taking into consideration his intellectual background and scholarly formation. Kristeller's essay was also the first place where the name Lorenzo Pisano (c. 1391–1465) appeared as part of this effort to understand Ficino's milieu.¹

Kristeller's study also provided several significant pointers to how the scholastic background and formation of Ficino might be understood. Interestingly, the great scholar drew attention not so much to the so-called 'Golden Age' of scholastic philosophy in the thirteenth century, or even to its developments in the so-called 'scholastic schools' of the fourteenth century, but to the more immediate scholastic circles of mid-fifteenth-century Florence to which Ficino was in various ways attached. These intellectual networks consisted mainly of philosophers and theologians who taught at the University of Florence and in the houses of learning (*studia*) of the different religious orders all over the city. It is in these circles that we find Lorenzo Pisano.

Notwithstanding Kristeller's achievement in producing such a vivid portrait of Ficino, a few significant questions remain in the wake of his earlier analysis and in the light of subsequent scholarship. The first question is whether we can detach the particular scholastic circles of Renaissance Florence from the more general movements that occurred in the fifteenth-century scholastic schools in the Italian peninsula. A further question is whether we can "leave" (as suggested by Kristeller) the more detailed comparisons between, for instance, a

1 Kristeller, 'The Scholastic Background of Marsilio Ficino', reprinted in his *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* (Rome 1984), pp. 35–97; Pisano is mentioned on p. 42. For the most significant effort to contextualize the historical importance of Pisano after Kristeller, with a rather detailed account of some of his texts, including *De amore*, but still under the shadow of the 'scholastic background of the Platonic academy and Ficino', see Field, *The Origins of the Platonic Academy of Florence*, pp. 158–174, 275–281. For other scholarly accounts of Lorenzo Pisano see n. 106 on pp. 158–159, and n. 127 on p. 162. An account of Pisano in the context of the reception of Platonic texts on love can be found in Sabrina Ebbersmeyer, *Sinnlichkeit und Vernunft. Studien zur Rezeption und Transformation der Liebestheorie Platons in der Renaissance* (Munich 2002), pp. 55–71; especially pp. 68–71.

humanist-oriented philosopher like Ficino and the scholastic philosophical tradition to “a competent medievalist”,² the implication being that only an appropriate division of labour between self-styled specialists in ‘Renaissance’ and ‘Medieval’ intellectual history can illuminate our understanding of this crucial issue. A final question prompted by Kristeller’s study is just who is qualified to work on the scholastic treatises of the Renaissance, especially since their scope, subject matter, literary form, and appeal to external forms of intellectual authority, all appear to run counter to accepted models of interpreting ‘Renaissance’ philosophical texts.

In order to deal adequately, if only provisionally, with these and related questions, I propose that we should refrain from employing the standard dichotomy so beloved of fifteenth-century historians which opposes so-called ‘scholasticism’ to so-called ‘humanism’.³ To my mind these terms are best regarded as ‘terms in transition’, representing intellectual traditions and movements which are constantly changing and developing, at various times affecting and influencing one another, while at other times admitting the existence of stark and historically instructive contrasts. Beyond anything else, these terms can only be studied in their historical specificity, before any further or even useful generalisation concerning their meaning and relationship can be extrapolated and proposed. If these labels are to have any utility in the history of fifteenth-century philosophical discourse, both in Florence and elsewhere, it is paramount that they be recast in the light of new interpretations of previously neglected texts, authors, and contexts. Only on this basis can it be hoped that we might be able to avoid some of the more unfortunate historiographical biases regarding the study of the relationship of the intellectual patrimony of the late ‘Middle-Ages’ to the new developments in learning that are rightly included in our present understanding of the ‘Renaissance’. It is the burden of this study to show that we can improve our understanding of this crucial period in the intellectual history of Florence—a period which bears heavily upon our reading of the subsequent development of early modern philosophy—by subjecting the terms ‘humanist’ and ‘scholastic’ to a more historically nuanced and precise scrutiny.

2 Kristeller suggests in ‘The Scholastic Background’, p. 41, that, since he does not feel qualified to undertake the task of presenting detailed comparisons between Ficino and the medieval philosophers, a competent medievalist should do it.

3 For some similar concerns in the context of Niccolò Tignosi’s commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, see David A. Lines, *Aristotle’s Ethics in the Italian Renaissance (ca. 1300–1650)*. *The Universities and the Problem of Moral Education* (Leiden 2002), pp. 206–220.

As is wellknown, several substantive changes and lasting innovations took place during the course of the fourteenth century in scholastic philosophy. Followers of Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Henry of Ghent, Giles of Rome, and John Duns Scotus formed what is called the 'old way' (*via antiqua*), developing the theories of those great masters as well as importing new ideas and methods. Evidence of these developments can be observed in the fields of moral theology and moral psychology. This description is of course a very limited account of these developments, since further innovations by thinkers such as the Dominican Durandus of St. Pourçain who advanced a sophisticated critique of Thomas Aquinas on many theological and philosophical issues, and the ideas of the Franciscan Peter Auriol who reinvigorated the discussion of the will, of place and of space, for instance, all made their mark on the direction of late scholastic discourse.⁴ In addition to these figures new approaches in logic, natural philosophy, and theology masterminded by the likes of William of Ockham, John Buridan, Gregory of Rimini, Nicole Oresme, and the Mertonists, all help in the construction of what is now regarded as the 'modern way' (*via moderna*). Naturally both 'ways' found their supporters, followers, critics, and innovators in fifteenth-century Italy.⁵

While Paul of Venice is a key figure in introducing the novelties in the field of logic into the Italian universities in the first decades of the fifteenth century, his students and followers continued this course in the fields of logic, natural philosophy, mathematics, and astronomy towards the second half of the century, where we find yet another key figure in the scholastic circles of the Italian universities: Nicoletto Vernia, whose writings reveal his vast interests mainly in natural philosophy and logic, but also in the status of medicine and civil law and the question of the plurality of intellects.⁶ Chairs for the teachings of the doctrines of Thomas, Scotus, and other thirteenth-century masters were founded in the houses of learning of the religious orders and in the theology faculties all over Italy. Thus, the Italian scene in the second half of the fifteenth century is full of self-proclaimed 'Thomists' and 'Scotists', but the difficult task—as we have seen in the previous chapters of this book—is then to

4 For Durandus' important account of free will see Stella, 'Le "Quaestiones de libero arbitrio" di Durando da S. Porciano'. For Auriol's important philosophical contributions see Schabel, 'Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom: Auriol, Pomponazzi, and Luther on "Scholastic Subtleties"'; 'Place, Space, and the Physics of Grace in Auriol's Sentences Commentary', in *Vivarium* 38/1 (2000), pp. 117–161.

5 See Vasoli, 'La tradizione scolastica e le novità filosofiche umanistiche del tardo Trecento e del Quattrocento', in his *Le filosofie del Rinascimento*, pp. 113–132, for an excellent cartography.

6 See Ennio de Bellis, *Nicoletto Vernia. Studi sull'aristotelismo del XV secolo* (Florence 2012).

determine what exactly these terms and titles mean in matters of philosophy and theology and for each individual thinker and context.

In the Florentine scholastic scene of the second half of the *Quattrocento* we find representatives of most if not all of the scholastic schools mentioned above.⁷ It is here that we find the charismatic Lorenzo Pisano writing, among other texts, a rather long dialogue on love.⁸ Let us turn now to a short consideration of this theme.

2 The Concept of Love

What is the conceptual basis for an understanding of Pisano's notion of love? Love seems to have a very particular meaning when we come to the fifteenth century. It has of course nothing to do with the romantic (and in a sense modern) notion—that is, love reduced to a mere subjective emotion, and indeed, reducing all the faculties of the soul to 'states of mind' or 'moods'. This notion was, to a certain extent, shaped by some seventeenth-century philosophers, distinguished representatives of the emerging new philosophy, science, and of a new methodological approach.⁹ In more technical terms we can say that

7 For a rather indicative picture of the scholastic schools in Florence and some prominent representatives around 1489, see Kraye, 'Lorenzo and the Philosophers', in *Classical Traditions in Renaissance Philosophy*, IV.

8 For one contemporary account of Pisano (written around 1461–1462) see Giovanni Caroli, *Liber dierum lucensium*, f. 38v: "Laurentius quoque Pisanus et alii plurimi horum ex numero erant qui tantorum patrum mores inbiberent, quique longanimitate ac patientia sua et eruditione populorum animos inflammarent." See also Ficino's undated letter to Cosimo de' Medici in his *Opera*, vol. 1, p. 615, where he praises Pisano's commentary to the *Song of Songs*. This letter is partially translated and briefly discussed in Field, *The Origins of the Platonic Academy of Florence*, p. 12. Ficino points out that the famous philosopher Nicolaus Fignosius Fulginas, that is Niccolò Tignosi da Foligno (1402–1474), one of Ficino's teachers at the University of Florence, also praised this text of Pisano. On Tignosi see Field, *The Origins of the Platonic Academy of Florence*, pp. 138–158; Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics in the Italian Renaissance (ca. 1300–1650)*. *The Universities and the Problem of Moral Education*, pp. 192–220.

9 See, e.g., Spinoza's account of the affections (but not his account of *amor Dei intellectualis* discussed mainly in the fifth part of his *Ethics* and representing a unique positive aspect of *affectus* which is crucial to the highest cognitive level!) in the third part of the *Ethics*, e.g., proposition 56 (including the demonstration and the remark there), or Descartes' discussion of the passions of the soul: *Les passions de l'ame* (Paris 1996), première partie, article 1 (p. 328): "En sorte que, bien que l'agent et le patient soient souvent fort differens, l'Action et la Passion ne laissent pas d'estre tousjours une mesme chose, qui a ces deux noms, à raison des deux divers sujets ausquels on la peut rapporter." For an overall perspective see, e.g., Gábor Boros,

the modern and romantic shift identifies also the rational faculties of the soul with blind and irrational appetites. But Pisano's understanding of love should also be distinguished from the biblical ἀγάπη, that is, a feeling of admiration towards God, or from the notion of *pietas* or *amor* in the sense of Christian love, charity, and devotion found in patristic and monastic theologies from late antiquity to the twelfth century and much beyond. The notion of love we find in Pisano should be understood, on the one hand, as a cosmic and universal force, almost a force of nature like the Empedoclean friendship and strife. This notion is obviously deeply inspired by some Platonic dialogues (mainly the *Symposium* and probably the *Phaedrus* as well), and some Neoplatonic accounts of it, either pagan or Christian. But more importantly, on the other hand, the notion of love which is most relevant to Pisano is the product of fourteenth and fifteenth-centuries debates and discussions of moral psychology, where love is understood either as a virtue, a habit, or an action. In those new theories of the will which were developed mainly in Franciscan circles among the followers of John Duns Scotus in the first decades of the fourteenth century, love is regarded as a certain determination of an action related to the will. While the activity of the intellect is characterized as action with reason, the activity of the will is characterized as action with love. While acting with reason means here acting according to some given natural determinations and restrictions, and thus acting in a necessary fashion and without freedom, acting with love under the domain of the will means here acting with freedom and under no compulsion. One should notice that love and reason as two different determinations of two faculties in our soul are by no means contrasted, and we should not regard love, described as the determination of the will's action, as irrational; love and will in this regard are rational just as much as reason and intellect; acting with reason means here acting under the domain of the intellect and according to the laws of a given nature. Thus, acting with reason is not acting in a rational way in our sense.¹⁰

Herman de Dijn, M. Moors (eds.), *The Concept of Love in 17th and 18th Centuries Philosophy* (Leuven 2007). This approach should be contrasted to scholastic treatments of *amor*. For one representative of sixteenth-century scholastic discourse see Nifo, *De intellectu*, p. 517: "[Virtus] Cogitativa ergo ut movetur a formis individualibus et ratiocinatur circa illas dicitur ratio particularis ac intellectus aliquis. Ut vero per actum eius accidit nobis fuga vel prosequela, electio vel amor, dicitur voluntas particularis." The whole passage is cited in Chapter Six, n. 59 above.

- 10 The studies by Guido Alliney are, once again, crucial for this analysis; see Chapter Two, n. 51, for detailed references. And see also Hoenen, 'Scotus and Scotist School. The Tradition of Scotist Thought in the Medieval and Early Modern Period'.

What provisional conclusions can we draw from this short analysis? We may cautiously advance three: 1. the concept of love in the present discussion does not refer to a subjective and personal emotion but rather to an objective power of the soul; 2. such a concept of love requires a notion of human rationality which includes both will (thus, acting with love towards goodness) and intellect (thus, acting with reason towards truth), and 3. while considering the concept of love in Pisano we must deal with the reception of two traditions: the classical tradition and the scholastic tradition. We may then try, if possible, to determine which tradition is more dominant and influential. Let us move on now to a closer examination of Lorenzo Pisano's intellectual circle and his formation.

3 Lorenzo Pisano's Life and Formation

Lorenzo Pisano was, as far as we know, an influential figure in the intellectual and academic life of Florence during the 1450s and 1460s. He gathered around him the best of Florentine youth and, as already mentioned, was one of the scholastic mentors of Marsilio Ficino—who, as we have seen, praised Pisano's long commentary on the *Song of Songs* in a letter to Cosimo de' Medici.¹¹ It is unclear whether he was a secular priest like Ficino, or whether he belonged to a religious order, and if so whether he was a Dominican (he went to study in Bologna liberal arts and theology, and he is mentioned by Caroli (n. 8) who focuses in that work on the heritage of great Dominican friars who belonged to the Florentine community of Santa Maria Novella), or an Augustinian Hermit, or belonged to some other Augustinian order like the Canons Regular, who were among those religious orders who chose to live under the rule of St Augustine, and thus played a role in one of the most influential religious and intellectual movements during the Renaissance and early modern era, the Augustinian movement.¹² Pisano studied Latin (and perhaps some Greek and theology as well) at the Augustinian *studium* in Santo Spirito (probably before

11 For the only contemporary biographical sketch of Pisano, written by his nephew Teofilo, see cod. 688, Biblioteca Universitaria Pisa, ff. 95v, 113–115. A list of Pisano's works is provided on ff. 95v and 114r–v.

12 Although focused mainly on the Order of the Augustinian Hermits, the detailed study by Eric Saak provides the broader intellectual context for Pisano's formation, being part of the religious orders who chose to live under the Augustinian Rule. See Eric L. Saak, *High Way to Heaven. The Augustinian Platform Between Reform and Reformation, 1292–1524* (Leiden 2002). On the importance of Augustine's Rule see, e.g., the remarks on pp. 9–10.

going to Bologna), a place known since the days of Petrarca and Salutati for being a centre for intellectual refinement common to humanists and professional philosophers and theologians.¹³ Among his teachers were Evangelista da Pisa and Ambrogio Traversari. In 1428 the canonry of San Lorenzo was created for him by Giovanni di Bicci, the father of Cosimo. We also know that he gave courses on Dante and on the Psalms at the University of Florence in 1431 and 1435. Despite his obvious importance and the fact that he was such a prolific author, the writings of Lorenzo Pisano are hardly known to scholars and we must wait for some basic studies which should shed further scholarly light on their importance in matters of context and influence. The relevant text for this chapter is the dialogue *De amore*, 228 double pages in one of the two full versions of this work which includes four dialogues and was probably written by the end of 1450s.¹⁴ I shall now offer a closer account of this work.

4 Lorenzo Pisano on Love

While trying to distinguish between appetite and love, Pisano presents the Thomistic definition of the will as a rational appetite together with the Scotistic description of the will as a queen who governs everything. (The image of the will as 'sovereign' in the soul is common throughout the thirteenth century, but—as we have already seen in this book—it becomes an essential part of the arguments advanced by fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Scotist defenders of the will). The voluntary free appetite is contrasted with the natural appetite which is totally governed by nature and is completely lacking in freedom.¹⁵

13 The famous literary account of these meetings can be found in Giovanni Gherardi da Prato's *Il paradiso degli Alberti*, ed. Antonio Lanza (Rome 1975).

14 For the purposes of this chapter I shall be using one of the only two complete manuscripts of this text that we have: Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, MS Budapest, Szechenyi Library (Bibl. Musei Nationalis), Clmae 185. All the references are to this manuscript. In a few cases I have also used MS Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Magl. XXI 115. For the basic information concerning the manuscripts of this text see Field, *The Origins of the Platonic Academy of Florence*, pp. 277–279.

15 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, ff. 15v–16r: "Nobilior supremusque appetitus rationalis est quod est inclinatio quaedam cognoscentis veritatem et concupiscentis bonum infinum et per infinum in his quae ad finem nansciscendum conducunt. Quoniam ultimum finem mere naturaliter ardet abque eo in obliquum resiliendi facultate funditus caret, in ceteris plane libertate gaudet et in ipsa voluntate omnium regina suas primas locavit sedes regaleque constabilivit solium et aureo imperialique sceptro inde omnibus imperat"; f. 33r: "Ast quia sola regina voluntas in anima est et cardo ipse in quo omnia voluuntur; ceteris potentiis

When these appetites are arranged according to a hierarchical structure and come forth by the order of reason (*ordo rationis*), then all actions, loves, and movements of soul and body are chaste, pure, noble, and prudent.¹⁶ This is still a seemingly Thomistic account. But at this point Pisano raises a question: what might be the right measure for human beings, who possess more than one nature?¹⁷ Pisano seems here to be very close to Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's famous account of human nature.¹⁸ The human person contains many different substantial natures, and in each nature there are different accidents which are related to the soul and the body, part of which are innate and part accrue with time. What Pisano is emphasizing here is the variety of powers or faculties and impulses found in the human soul: not only in human nature in general, but in each individual there are many actions which the human soul nurtures with loves.¹⁹ What does this mean? Here Pisano discloses what he

ipsa per se se tam spiritualibus atque organicis, tam sensitivis atque motivis iubet. Iussa ille suscipiunt et suscepta perveniunt.

- 16 *Ibid.*, f. 16v: "Ceterum quando hi appetitus in ordine rationis ad opus egrediuntur et superiorem inferior pone adsequitur desideria operationes omnes amores motusque omnes anime et corporis, casti, pudici, honesti, prudentes plane sunt."
- 17 *Ibid.*: "Quia sicut rectum mensura et regula est sui et obliqui ita ratio honesti sui turpisque actionis, sed rationis nostre quis gloriatur se mensuram novisse haud eum in particularibus fixa determinata est regula nec certus ordo et mensura humane rationi datur unde necessarium est ut ad superiorem rationem semper intueatur. Difficultatem quoque haud mediocrem facit quia in una eademque persona uno eodemque hominis supposito plures naturas substantiales in infinitum diversas reperimus, et in una natura accidentia diversa anime et corporis quorum aliqua ingenua aliqua tempore super addita experimur..."
- 18 See Bausi (ed.), *Discorso sulla dignità dell'uomo*, pp. 8–10: "Igitur hominem accepit, indiscretæ opus imaginis, atque in mundi positum meditullio sic est alloquutus: 'Nec certam sedem, nec propriam faciem, nec munus ullum peculiare tibi dedimus, o Adam, ut quam sedem, quam faciem, quæ munera tute optaveris, ea pro voto, pro tua sententia habeas et possideas. Definita ceteris natura intra præscriptas a nobis leges coercetur. Tu, nullis angustiis coercitus, pro tuo arbitrio, in cuius manu te posui, tibi illam præfinies.' Compare, e.g., Pisano's account of the status of man as the only free creature; see *De amore*, f. 22r: "Quamobrem principiis naturalibus nulla creatura recalcitrare valet ipse etiam homo qui libertate gaudet..." This militates against Field's conclusions that "Lorenzo is antihumanist in his lack of concern... for seeing any basis of comparability of human experience outside of the 'natural' framework." See Field, *The Origins of the Platonic Academy of Florence*, p. 173.
- 19 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, f. 16v: "Ast humana anima quando sole est nobilior quia semper nobiliora et simpliciora plures habent operationes haud solum in universa hominum natura, sed in uno quoque homine infinitos quos edit, lactat adfovetque amores." Compare this account to Nifo's, who strongly connects the act of the human will to opposite things (*opposita*) in his *De intellectu*, pp. 517–518: "Voluntas autem hominis, quoniam indicat per

regards as a secret principle which is the solution to the difficulty he has just presented. He contends that all virtues, faculties, impulses and habits are nurtured by their own unique loves, and so, thanks to the fertility of love, it functions just like a root or a source which unites the different powers; it is just like a small bush which penetrates into plants of different kinds and natures and spreads in them flowers of different colours. It is clear then that different principles or elements, either those which seem to be related and similar or those which look different and alien, all lead to one love which is worthy of praise.²⁰

Love is presented here as an internal power which unites many different principles in the human soul: virtues, faculties, impulses and habits. It is the fecundity of love which is responsible for the functioning of this complex apparatus. The point is that reason alone is not sufficient, since it can affect only one nature at one time, but human psychology is, as we have seen, far too complex and contains many different natures. We need another principle which will be able to create harmony and unity among different and sometimes contradicting faculties. What we find in Pisano is a recognition that man is not like any other 'natural' creature since he has many 'natures' under his persona. This is why reason alone is not sufficient for guiding man. We need something else—another kind of guiding-force—and it is in this context that Pisano introduces love as a principle with two qualities: harmony and unity. This seems to be the perfect guide for human psychology. Harmony and unity are also emphasized by Ficino in his famous account of love found in his commentary on Plato's *Symposium*. Ficino points out the universal power of love to create unity and concord between different parts of the cosmos, including the elements of the

intellectum opposita, immo et ipsa potest et opposita persequi vel fugere. Ergo voluntas motoris est alterius rationis a voluntate nostra. Ex his sequitur quod cum intellectus in se consideratur, ut infimus est abstractorum, sit una forma omnino liberata a materia ac tantum intelligens unum intelligibile, scilicet genus substantiarum separatarum. Immo tantum uno modo vult, et inde tollitur contingentia voluntatis, eo quia tollitur indicium intellectus ad opposita."

- 20 *Ibid.*, f. 17r: "Advertendum quoque cura multa simulatque mente quod magnum nature archanum reconditumque secretum est quod quamvis una queque virtus, potentia, appetitus et habitus suos legitimos et unicos edat lactetque amores veluti propria ex radice dumtaxat cum propter amoris fecunditatem tum propter unitatem potentiarum, unaque radix, unaqueque arbuscula veluti plurimis adulterinis insita fuerit surculis discoloribus effloret flosculis diversis onusta bacis se incurrat. Sepenumero etiam plurima tum cognata tum peregrina principia ad unum confirmandum amorem concurrunt..." The same image of the bush (*arbuscula*) and fruits is also found in f. 16or.

world and the humours in our bodies.²¹ But while Ficino is mainly inspired by some Platonic and Neoplatonic poetic and rhetorical accounts of love, Pisano is more concerned with the function of love as a power in the human soul.

At this point it is perhaps worthwhile to point out that we should put to one side the assorted historiographical clichés concerning the sacred connection between Thomas, and later on Thomists, and the Dominicans in general, as advocates of reason and intellect, in their debate against Scotus, Scotists, and the Franciscans in general, all of whom were keen supporters of the will. Regarding the will as *appetitus rationalis* was Thomas' elegant solution in his own system, in order to save the will as a useful and important faculty in man's soul with no intention of contrasting it with the intellect, only expressing a slight preference for reason and intellect. Scotus' theories of the will, beyond the rhetorical and conceptual explicit and implicit critiques of Thomas' theories which can be found in his writings, made important contributions to medieval speculations about human psychology. Thomists and Scotists alike continued to develop these theories all through the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and even beyond. In this context we can understand and appreciate Spinoza's radical statement in the *corollarium* of proposition 49 in the second part of the *Ethics*: "voluntas et intellectus unum et idem sunt." Spinoza is radical exactly because he stands against a whole philosophical tradition and discourse which was very much alive as late as the seventeenth century, constantly using 'traditional' terms taken from that discourse. In this context we find Lorenzo Pisano, the canon of San Lorenzo in mid-fifteenth-century Florence, who is dedicating a long dialogue to the discussion of the importance of love in the human soul and for human psychology, explicitly pointing out the shortcomings of reason (in the narrow sense of this term) with regard to human natures.

21 Marsilio Ficino, *Commentarium in convivium Platonis de amore*, ed. Pierre Laurens (Paris 2002), p. 57: "Denique unitate partium suarum cuncta servantur, dispersione partium pereunt. Unitatem vero partium mutuus earundem efficit amor. Quod in humoribus nostrorum corporum et mundi elementis intueri licet. Quorum concordia, ut ait Empedocles pythagoreus, et mundus et corpus nostrum constat, discordia dissipatur. Concordiam vero illis pacis atque amoris prestat vicissitudo." See also pp. 53–55: "Cuiam igitur dubium erit, quin amor omnibus ad omnia sit ingenitus? Atque id est quod Dionysius Areopagita in libro De divinis nominibus ex Hierothei mente his verbis significavit. Amorem sive divinum sive angelicum sive spiritalem sive animale sive naturalem dixerimus, insitivam quamdam intelligamus commiscentemque virtutem, que superiora quidem ad inferiorum providentiam movet, equalia rursus ad socialem sui invicem communionem conciliat, ac postremo inferiora quaque ammonet, ut ad potiora sublimioraque convertantur."

Pisano contrasts ‘nature’ to ‘will’ and points out the importance of the will as the only free power which is a self-mover and rules the intellect and the rest of the faculties in the soul. The will is also the primary seat of loves.²² But when faced by the final supreme end and natural goodness the will is not so free, but is rather moved by nature and cannot retreat.²³ At this point another master who thinks otherwise bursts into the discussion, a fact which should remind us that Pisano wrote a dialogue, in which different *dramatis personae* participate—usually known figures from the intellectual and academic circles of Florence in the 1450s and 1460s—and not a dogmatic treatise.²⁴ This master thinks that the will is capable of suspending its activity even in front of the supreme goodness.²⁵ It is of course an expression of the Scotist view which receives a response here: even the activity of the will is penetrated by reason, since the unique function of reason is organizing and uniting things which seem as if they were taking place through the activity of the will and without the intellect, but in fact they were taking place through the responsibility of the will in relation to the intellect. A good and well-disposed will is essential for man’s happiness, but with regard to the responsibility for man’s happiness and salvation even the will itself, which is regarded as the only power which can imitate God without compulsion, is moved by divine majesty.²⁶ Finally a

22 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, f. 34r: “Ceterum quia in essentialiter ordinatis tandem est devenire ad unum quia natura pluritatem infinitatemque abhorret aspernaturque, et ipsa voluntas sola libera est et se ipsam movet et intellectui imperat; ceterisque potentiis iubet, omnia ad ipsam redigimus et amorum primam sedem ipsam predicamus.”

23 *Ibid.*, f. 34r: “Atqui quamquam voluntas mere libera sit perque sese semetipsam et reliqua moveat, nihilominus circa ultimum finem supremum naturaleque bonum minime libertate gaudet, sed natura licet movetur abque eo minime resilire potest.”

24 This practice was by no means unique to Pisano, who wrote, apart from *De amore*, two other dialogues, probably between the late 1450s and the early 1460s, entitled: *Dialogi humilitatis* and *Dialogi quinque*, which are still in manuscript; see Field, *The Origins of the Platonic Academy of Florence*, pp. 158–174, especially p. 162. For other examples see Chapter Six, n. 7 above.

25 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, f. 34r: “Erat in corona alterius discipline magister nec incelebri nomine clarus, qui credit voluntatem etiam circa supremum bonum posse suspendere actum suum; verum natura vir validus et furibundus qui auditis his crispans seipsum(?) et quatiens obcepit garrire strepere et clamare.” Compare this and other arguments in support of the will with Giorgio Benigno Salviati’s account discussed in Chapter Six above.

26 *Ibid.*, ff. 34r–34v: “Alius enim voluntatis actus est secundum quem rationis impressio quedam in ea relinquitur. Quia proprium rationis est ordinare et conferre que quantumcumque in actu voluntatis appareant haud intellectus sunt, sed voluntatis in ordine ad intellectum. Bona enim ordinataque voluntas tanti est pretii ut hominem suum felicem reddat, quam nemo felicitatem rapere turbareque potest nisi prius per se sui ipsius ipsa

synthesis is presented: the seeds of true love are always in the intellect, but they are nurtured by the warmth of the will, and so while the clarity of the light of truth is shining in the intellect, the goodness in the human soul is located in the will, and all the inferior faculties are justly following the decisions of the will either through compulsion, practice, or habit.²⁷ Apparently such a synthesis is not in agreement with what we have in Ficino's commentary, where we find that love and not the cognition of God is what brings us back to heaven.²⁸ This statement comes at the end of the discussion of the fourth speech in the *Symposium*, the speech of Aristophanes, and it is obviously not part of the Platonic account but rather part of Ficino's tendency to support the will and love as against the intellect and reason in this important medieval and Renaissance debate.

Since Pisano is writing a dialogue, he can reach the same synthesis between the will and the intellect also by presenting a strong intellectualist position as a starting point, thus reflecting the outlook and arguments used by its contemporary supporters. This is exactly what we have in the discussion just following a reference to pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite:

Wherefore the divine Dionysius, while flying like some eagle above all birds in the spiritual heights, using the light of his talent and wisdom, never hesitated to assert, in his book entitled *On the Angelic Hierarchy*, that those supreme intelligences, while orbiting divinity itself, are ignorant of its proper virtues and never grasp the divine illuminations in a complete manner. We can praise intellect itself in three ways: by virtue of its nature, by virtue of its operation, and by virtue of its end; through it [the intellect] the will binds together the nature of everybody and gives it

iacturam fecerit. Verum enimvero quo ordine etiam ipsa voluntas a divina maiestate que sola dicitur illam posse non cogendo imitare moveatur . . ."

27 *Ibid.*, f. 34v: "Veri amoris pruni fetus prunaeque suorum semina in intellectu quippe semper sunt, verum a voluntatis calore confoventur donec fermentur. Itaque cum claritas est in intellectu et veritatis lumine enitescit qua sicut oculus adest corpori ita intellectus, anime bonitas semper est in voluntate et cum omnes itidem inferiores vires, vel vi vel disciplina vel habitu, suis per omnem modum consiliis et ratione obtemperant."

28 Marsilio Ficino, *De amore*, p. 83: "Quod ergo nos celo restituit non dei cognitio est, sed amor." And see also Ficino's letter in *Lettere I*, pp. 201–210. An example of the epistemological utility of love can be found in Ficino's *De amore*, p. 87: "Quoniam vero nostre mentis cognitio a sensibus ducit originem, bonitatem ipsam rerum penetralibus insitam nec intelligeremus umquam neque appeteremus, nisi ad eam spetiei exterioris inditiis manifestis proveheremur. Qua in re mirabilis admodum forme huius comitisque ipsius amoris apparet utilitas."

its function and its end. Observing the dignity of the intellect they assert that it far precedes the will inasmuch as the will, as a bare power, has nothing in itself to offer. But the first principles are naturally impressed in the agent intellect, which is a sort of participation in uncreated truth and, according to Aristotle, everyone by nature desires to know and admits to have passion and longing for knowledge. The will, on the other hand, is lying utterly languid, practically dead and buried: it can only desire, strive after, and devise what was first illustrated, stimulated, and called forth by the practical intellect, whence the seed-beds of the virtues simply emanate from the intellect.²⁹

Following pseudo-Dionysius' account of the supreme intelligences (intellects of angels, or angelic intellects) and their lack of familiarity with particular virtues and divine illuminations, Pisano emphasizes three admirable aspects of the intellect: its nature, operation, and end. This allows him to present an *a contra* argument: many contend that the will is superior to nature, action and end. In reply Pisano presents the intellect as the supreme power, while the will is regarded as a 'bare power'. The first principles are naturally impressed into the agent intellect since it takes part in the non-created truth, and, following Aristotle's famous opening words of the *Metaphysics*, it is part of the natural desire of all men to know and learn. The will, on the other hand, is weak and as good as dead until it is illuminated and stimulated by the practical intellect, which is regarded as solely responsible for the seed-beds of the virtues.

29 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, f. 83v: "Quamobrem divinus Dionysius, veluti aquila quedam spirituali evolans altitudine ingenii et sapientie lumine supra omnes aviculas, nequaquam addubitavit asseverare, in libro quem de angelica ierarchia inscripsit, ipsas supremas intelligentias ambientes ipsam divinitatem proprias virtutes ignorare, et divinas illuminationes nequaquam per omnem modum capere. Possumus tripliciter intellectum ipsum, ex natura sui videlicet, operatione et fine laudare; eoque omnibus colligere voluntatem (voluntas *cod.*) naturam, opus et finem prestare. Respicentes ad intellectus dignitatem asseverant illum voluntatis longe preire, qua voluntas ut nuda potentia nihil secum adfert; intellectui autem agenti naturaliter prima principia esse impressa quod est participatio quedam increate veritatis, et a natura amorem scientie appetitumque—dicente Aristotile—omnes natura scire desiderant habere omnes fatentur. Voluntas autem e contrario elanguida, emortua, sepulta iacet, nec prius quid desiderare adpetere machinari quam ab intellectu practico (*pratico cod.*) illustretur, excitetur, evocetur, unde seminaria virtutum ab intellectu simpliciter emanant." Compare these and the following arguments in support of the intellect with those found in Vincenzo Bandello's *Opusculum* discussed in Chapter Five above, and with Alamanno Donati's *De intellectus voluntatisque excellentia*, discussed in Chapter Seven above.

This strong intellectualist account is relevant not only to our present life but also to the afterlife and with regard to the beatific vision: it is only because the intellect recognizes the final end as true and good that it can present it to the will.³⁰ The intellect, not the will, contains in itself the object of its enjoyment; through the act of the intellect and the intellectual power many things are united together, and this intellectual power shapes the wise men. The result of the act of the intellect is an unformed concept in the mind, which is called 'thought' and 'concept' after it was formed—and is also called a word.³¹ The will itself is regarded in this context as 'intelligized'.³²

Pisano is even willing to deprive the will of one of its unique features—so strongly emphasized by Scotus and the Scotists—freedom. He contends that the intellect is truly free, while the fact that the will can turn away from the final end is a sign of its weakness.³³ Pisano is turning upside-down the Scotist position: the greatest advantage of the will according to Scotus and some Scotists (the ability of the will to turn away from the beatific vision) becomes here a serious weakness and defect, used as a proof of the will's inferiority in comparison to the intellect.

Much in the same fashion is his treatment of the argument regarding the superiority of the will's object (goodness) over the intellect's object (truth). In this case as well, Pisano turns the argument round in favour of the intellect: differently from human happiness which consists of virtuous actions

30 *Ibid.*, f. 84v: "... in patria est ipsa visio beatifica que est ultima felicitas que nec operatione voluntatis eget, nec ipsa voluntas ad illam pertingit..."; "Intelligere intellectus legitimus actus ad rem ipsam intus penetrat et rerum naturam nudam contemplatur; relique fere cuncte potentie videntur accidentia ambire. Itaque tam noster intellectus atque angelicus absque voluntatis actione rem primo prescribit, inde voluntati rem proponit haud veluti simplicem obiectum sed sub boni ratione, quam haud minus intellectus ultimum finem cognoscit ut verum atque ut bonum contemplatur et voluntati prosternit." Compare these words with the view of Scotus on this issue discussed in Guido Alliney's 'La contingenza della fruizione beatifica'.

31 *Ibid.*: "Ad hec ipse intellectus habet in se quo fruatur, voluntas nihil, qua ad actum intelligendi ex parte intellective potentie concurrunt plurima; ipsa videlicet intellectiva potentia sapientes informans, eam actus intelligendi forma relicta ac impressa conceptus mentis informis, qui dicitur cogitatio et conceptus postremo formatus quod verbum dicitur."

32 *Ibid.*, f. 85r: "... ipsa voluntas est intellecta."

33 *Ibid.*: "Itaque imperium quamvis sit voluntatis signum tamen potest aliquomodo dici verbum et ad intellectum pertingere. In hoc autem quod multi intellectui detrahunt asserendo quod ratione cogatur, et ob id illi voluntatem preponunt, eo quod sua libertate possit semper in contrarium resilire; mihi plane videntur intellectus veras celebrare laudes quam sicuti voluntatis infirmitas est posse resilire ab ultimo fine..."

(as established by Aristotle), divine happiness consists of being passive. Love is the example here: the lover is in the hands of the loved one. In divine matters we are at the hands of God and only thanks to Him do we exist and live.³⁴ This can be compared, to some extent, to Ficino's account of the relation between lover, loved, death and resurrection, which follows a long classical and Platonic tradition.³⁵ But unlike the strong intellectualist tendency reflected in this context by Pisano, Ficino, as we have seen (n. 28), usually takes the opposite view, and emphasizes the crucial importance of love and will as against cognition.

Loyal to his method of harmonizing conflicting views, Pisano presents once again a synthesis, in which the intellect is loving and the will is understanding.³⁶ Love here creates harmony between the loving intellect and the intelligent will. This synthesis is followed by a critique of the intellectualist approach.³⁷ Once again we find here the important idea of the shortcomings of the intellect: there are difficulties which escape the intellect, problems which do not

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- 34 *Ibid.*, ff. 85r–85v: “Quin affirmant quoque veritatis nudam cognitionem absque felici bone voluntatis usu constituere hominem miserum, qua ea que sunt in homine nequeunt homini beatitudinem sufficere; sed ea que sunt extra hominem illi beatitudinem largiri. Quam tametsi humana felicitas—ut placuit nostro philosopho—constat in operatione secundum virtutem, divina dumtaxat e contrario consistit tantum in patiendi; qua nulla actio prima circa divina facit hominem beatum sed simplex passio illum felicem constituit. Quamobrem imprimis illa effertur sententia: asserens amantem per prestantiorem modum esse in amato atque patitur quam in se ipso presertim in divinis quia in maius transformatur et in illo sistit et in illo vivit.” An important account of the passive faculty in human nature in the context of ascending to the divine unity can be found later on in Pisano's dialogue, where the secret of the eternal plan or consideration is mentioned, alluding to Psalm 19 and raising the question whether the human mind can understand this secret. See *ibid.*, f. 145v: “Itaque cum natura humana solum in virtute patiendi esset capax ascendendi usque ad unionem divinitatis; deus nec immemor sue munificentie cum prius larga manu infinita bona impartitus foret in plenitudine temporis secundum archanum aeterni consilii se ipsum concessit.”
- 35 Marsilio Ficino, *De amore*, pp. 43–49; see e.g., pp. 45–47: “Moritur enim qui amat in se ipso semel, cum se negligit. Reviviscit in amato statim, cum amatus eum ardenti cogitatione complectitur. Reviviscit iterum, cum in amato se denique recognoscit et amatum se esse non dubitat.”
- 36 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, f. 86r: “Idcirco intellectus qui tunc est diligens, et voluntas que est intelligens, in unum amorem communem inhabitum conversum equa lance conveniunt . . .”
- 37 *Ibid.*, f. 88v: “Cadunt etiam inter hasce difficultates que intellectum fugiunt, qua ad hec haud uno itinere itur sed diverso et sinuoso calle; ipse quoque amor cum nos raptat non unis potentiis utitur semper sed diversis, que mea de mente neque profeta neque sapiens, neque intelligentia aliqua ad liquidum vel si conaretur comprehendere posset.”

take one path but rather a diverse and somewhat curved way. With regard to such matters love draws us to the solutions by using not one kind of power but different kinds; such matters cannot be dealt with by the mind which is unsuccessful in perceiving them, nor can they be understood by any intelligence, try as hard as it will. We need another instrument to deal with these difficulties, and here love replaces the intellect. It is obvious that most human concerns cannot be dealt with or solved in one way only (one kind of rationality), that most, if not all, moral issues reflect the psychological structure of the human persona, containing many different natures, and are in need of many different powers beyond the intellect (as well as a broader sense of rationality). What we seem to have here is an Augustinian echo, in the fifteenth century, of the ethical syllogism found in Aristotle: actions which are performed with love reflect flexibility in the context of moral issues. This is an Augustinian adaptation of Aristotle's formula regarding the object of prudence: things which could have happened otherwise.³⁸

While Aristotle is still an important philosophical authority for Pisano, he is by no means an outstanding authority who shines above any other Greek or Roman author. Pisano's treatise presents a rather wide range of ancient sources including poets like Homer, Hesiod, Simonides, Musaeus, Aeschylus, Theognis or Theocritus, cited on many occasions in the original Greek, historians like Herodotus, philosophers like Empedocles or Plato and doxographers like Diogenes Laertius or Aulus Gellius.³⁹ Pisano seems to have a first-hand knowl-

38 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, e.g., 1141b8–12. In his biographical sketch of Pisano, Teofilo mentions among the works written by his uncle a commentary on Aristotle's *Ethics*. See ff. 95v and 114r. On the status of Aristotle in the Renaissance see e.g., Bianchi, *Studi sull'Aristotelismo del rinascimento*; 'Continuity and Change in the Aristotelian Tradition'. For one contemporary 'Aristotelian' philosopher, Niccolò Tignosi, who reflects this known distinction see *Nicolai Tignosii Fulginatis ad Cosmam Medicem in illos qui mea in Aristotelis comentaria criminantur opusculum*, in Sensi, 'Niccolò Tignosi da Foligno. L'opera e il pensiero', p. 477: "Omnium igitur que sunt, prima et maxima differentia est, ut alia necessaria sint, alia ut contingunt... Contingentium autem omnia permutantur, ut si sunt, statim esse non possint. Sin vero non sint, deducuntur ad esse. Quamobrem satis constat in sue nature posse incipere et desinere, sic more continuo discretis ordinibus variantur. Potest itaque animal currere, cras fieri manuale bellum, quod fortassis numquam erit futurum. Et quem admodum voluntates hominum, sic et iudicia variantur, atque negotia: quoniam ex intellectu practico, nostraque intrinseca meditatione, velut a nobis principium habentia summunt exordium."

39 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, e.g., f. 3r (a reference to Plato's *Symposium*); ff. 3r–3v (a citation from Theocritus); f. 4r (a citation from Plato's *Symposium*); f. 5v (a reference to Empedocles); f. 6r (a citation from Hesiod); f. 8v (a citation from Herodotus); f. 12r (a reference to Lucretius); f. 18r (a citation from Musaeus); f. 22v (a reference to Simonides and

edge of these sources, and thus, from an intellectual point of view, he reflects the cultural project of the humanists, a project which reached its first step of maturity in matters of historical consciousness with Petrarca and his critical assessment of the Aristotelian-scholastic discourse: Aristotle was only a man, and he could make mistakes in some of his speculations, and so lead many to fall into error.⁴⁰ But it is well-known that we still find a clear Aristotelian presence in a humanist-oriented philosopher like Ficino, or a clear scholastic resonance in Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, the so-called ‘prince of humanism’.⁴¹ These are only a few examples from the Florentine intellectual scene which are close enough to Pisano to show some of the complexities in reconstructing this intellectual milieu in general, and Pisano’s philosophical orientations in particular. Thus, we can find in Pisano’s account of love glimpses of Empedoclean

a citation from Aeschylus); f. 29r (a reference to Plautus and Terence); f. 30r (references to Diogenes Laertius, Plato, Virgil, Aulus Gellius; the authority of Theocritus is used here to point out the danger inherent in bad love); f. 30v (references to Theognis and Theocritus); ff. 38v and 39v (citations from Homer); f. 126r (a citation from Aristotle’s *Ethics*). These are only haphazard examples, not a systematic account of Pisano’s classical sources. With regard to the idea that Aristotle was only a man see Bianchi, *Studi sull’Aristotelismo del rinascimento*, chapter four.

- 40 Francesco Petrarca, *De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia*, in David Marsh (ed. and transl.), *Invectives* (Cambridge, Mass. 2003), p. 264: “Ego vero magnum quendam virum ac multisacrum Aristotilem, sed fuisse hominem, et idcirco aliqua, imo et multa nescire potuisse arbitror...”; p. 270: “Sed ad Aristotilem revertamur, cuius splendore lippas atque infirmos perstringente oculos multi iam erroris in foveas lapsi sunt.” For the beginnings of the humanist movement in Italy see Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients: The Origins of Humanism from Lovato to Bruni*; on the place of Petrarca see pp. 230–291.
- 41 Marsilio Ficino, *De amore*, p. 199: “Ex iis duo virtutum genera numerantur. Morales, inquam, virtutes et intellective illis prestantiores. Intellective sunt sapientia, scientia, prudentia; morales: iustitia, fortitudo et temperantia. Morales propter operationes earum civiliaque officia notiores sunt. Intellective propter reconditam veritatem, occultiores. Preterea, qui honestius moribus educatur, utpote purior aliis, facile ad intellectivas virtutes erigitur”; Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno, e scritti vari*, p. 140: “Nec potest ex omnibus sibi recte propriam selegisse, qui omnes prius familiariter non agnoverit. Adde quod in unaquaque familia est aliquid insigne, quod non sit ei commune cum ceteris. Atque ut a nostris, ad quos postremo philosophia pervenit, nunc exordiar, est in Joanne Scoto vegetum quiddam atque discussum, in Thoma solidum et aequabile, in Aegidio tersum et exactum, in Francisco acre et acutum, in Alberto priscum, amplum et grande, in Henrico, ut mihi visum est, semper sublime et venerandum.”

physics on the one hand,⁴² and the notion of an ancient faith (*prisca fides*) which is associated with some of the ancient Greek poets on the other hand.⁴³

The power of love is depicted by Pisano as a universal force which secretly effects and guides everything; it is the criterion for assessing every creature in the cosmos.⁴⁴ With regard to human psychology Pisano points out its complexity due to its contrasting faculties, which often are the causes of our confusion in moral issues.⁴⁵ Love seems to stand in the centre of this psychology:

42 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, f. 7v: "Quattuor plane sunt pernota semina qua verum omnium citra ambitum sp<h>ere actionum et passionum manifesta principia inimica invicem dissimilia et magnopere inter se repugnantia et longe natura disiuncta dumtaxat per quandam amicitiam unaque amorissima summus summa unis comunicant."

43 *Ibid.*, f. 30v: "...constantissimi auctores prisca fide digni talia enarrassent." This notion of an ancient faith and poetry should be compared with Ficino's account of *prisca theologia*, and should be understood in the broader Renaissance setting between e.g., Coluccio Salutati in the late fourteenth century and Marcello di Virgilio Adriani in the early sixteenth century and their important accounts of ancient pagan poets, theology, and Christian teachings. Other related phrases are found on f. 105v: 'pure religion' (*casta religio*); on f. 133r: 'ancient religion' (*vetus religio*); on f. 134r: 'pious religion' (*pia religio*); on f. 149r: 'ancient and firm religion' (*vetus fidelisque religio*); and on f. 149v: 'learned antiquity' (*docta antiquitas*), which again should be compared with Ficino's account of religion found in his early work, *De Christiana religione*; see Marsilio Ficino, *Opera*, vol. 1, pp. 1–77. For some basic scholarly accounts of these phrases in the context of the Italian humanists see e.g., Trinkaus, *In Our Image and Likeness—Humanity and Divinity in Italian Humanist Thought*; Walker, *The Ancient Theology: Studies in Christian Platonism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century*; Vasoli, *Quasi sit deus—studi sul Marsilio Ficino*.

44 *Ibid.*, f. 9v: "Semper enim amor ipse divinus qui omnia produxit et sua statione insedere omnia iubet, quive penitus interior est ipsis in rebus atque ipse res sibi sint clanculum, amorem omnibus aspirit suum et spirando mutat (motat *cod.*); "Ast quia unaqueque creatura quanto de amoris vi et virtute magis capit, tanto nobilior habilior simpliciorque est et superiorem locum occupat primum ipsum ut amoris afflatus sensit semetipsam etiam amore afflat et redundantia quadam amoris est enim fecundus natura adeaque que sibi contermina sunt et vicinam et multifariam incognata facile se refundit."

45 *Ibid.*, f. 17v: "Quotiens cogeris ob diversitatem pre mentium amorum voluntatem voluntate dampnare amorem sententiam amore sententia reprobare leta tristibus certa dubiis presentia futuris commutare et mala pro bonis eligere. Nonne eadem voluntas est que patitur criminatur iudicat et dampnat isdem intellectus que sua que cognoscit bona aspernatur isdem appetitus qui vult et non vult, et iterum que noluit ardet quique amara simul et dulcia absorbet et quod iniquius ad modum quod vult non agit, quod noluit perficit, quod non vult eligit et amarissima confecta ab syptio et aloe pro melle et manna allambit mandit ruminat." See Ebbersmeyer, *Sinnlichkeit und Vernunft*, pp. 68–71.

For this inclination, concord and unity concerning things heard, seen, invented, [and] desired with joy, hope, pleasure, choice, [and] gesture—this is clearly love—which is born out of goodness and beauty of things, and through the assent of the soul with desire, delight, hope, pleasure, and also many other passions and affections.⁴⁶

It is perhaps this focus on human psychology which makes Pisano's dialogue on love unique in comparison with previous classical, pagan or patristic accounts of this theme, by which he was no doubt inspired. Pisano is merging together the classical pagan, patristic, and monastic heritage with the more recent accounts of human psychology and the faculties of the human soul—the product of fourteenth and fifteenth-centuries discussions and debates among different scholastic thinkers. This practice of conflating different classical and patristic traditions is a typical humanist practice; Pisano is adding to it here his detailed knowledge of later scholastic accounts and he thereby provides a very interesting, dynamic and rich account of the function of love in the human psyche.

Thus loves, or rather acts of love which are, as we have seen in Pisano, the product of both the intellect and will, are described as pure, pious, gentle, honest, modest, but also as rational. Love is regarded as the only virtue or power that can teach us how to act prudently when action is needed, but also how to endure matters which require endurance. Pisano emphasizes here the strong connection between love and freedom: even in slavery love enjoys freedom.⁴⁷ This last point is important, since it includes an acknowledgment of subjective interiority and of internal freedom. Love is a powerful force in the soul and an agent who is acting with love is always free. (This should remind us of the strong Augustinian element in Pisano, and that so much of Augustine is contained in both scholastic and non-scholastic texts of the fifteenth century).⁴⁸

46 *Ibid.*, f. 20r: "Illa namque inclinatio, ille consensus, illaque unio circa audita, visa, conficta, concupita cum gaudio, spe, voluptate, electione, gesticulatione—amor utique est—qui ex rerum bonitate et pulchritudine, et anime assensu cum desiderio, delectatione, spe, voluptate, multisque quoque aliis passionibus et affectionibus oritur."

47 *Ibid.*, f. 34v: "Tunc amores omnes semper casti, pii, mansueti, honesti, pudici, rationabiles..."; f. 43r: "Omnium virtutum amor ipse virtus est quia solus novit prudenter et mature agenda agere et constanter patienda pati"; f. 43v: "Amor enim nulli violentiam facit, leges omnibus ponit, servitutem aspernatur, libertatemque colit et quod plus est in servitute etiam ipse libertate gaudet." Compare Ficino's *De amore*, p. 115: "Amor enim liber est ac sua sponte in libera oritur voluntate, quam neque deus etiam coget, qui ab initio liberam fore decrevit."

48 A good starting point for this crucial theme is Irena Backus' (ed.), *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West. From the Carolingians to the Maurists*, 2 vols. (Leiden 1997).

Pisano is not willing to contrast the intellect with the will. He points out the importance of different faculties in the soul: natural, sensual, and rational. Each of these faculties has its own duty, responsibility, and place:

There are indeed in us so many different kinds of natural, sensual, and rational faculties—each enjoying the exercise of its own actions and duties, placing each in its own single and proper seat in its own place, where natural justice, that unutterable ornament which is imprinted and fastened deeply into the essence of the soul, used to pour [into the soul] streams of nectar, both through itself and through the faculties concomitant to itself, and it used to pour marvellous boons mainly with [its] very generous hand. And so it used to sprinkle them into the rational faculties, i.e., the intellect and the will, which make the human being what it is, so that without sound and fury, and with very easy assent, they submitted [themselves] to God, and perfumes of all colours were spread around by divine command through the venerated spirit.⁴⁹

We notice that both the intellect and the will are regarded here as rational powers or faculties in the soul which make us what we are; that the human powers in the soul are responsible for the establishment of natural justice, and that Pisano is joining here the human and the divine dimension only at the end of the process, while leaving a significant latitude for the agent to act in a moral way according to natural justice.

But it is equally important for Pisano to warn his readers of the destructive power of the passions, and to establish the intellect and the will as two supreme mental and incorporeal faculties, out of which pure love is produced, and thus to distinguish sharply between the passions which are attached to the body, and love, intellect and will, which are located in the soul.⁵⁰ In this way

49 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, f. 62r: "Sunt utique in nobis tanta potentiarum genera videlicet rationalia, sensualia, naturalia, que singula suis actibus et officiis gaudent, suisque locis singula, propria locavere sedes in quibus naturalis iustitia decus illud ineffabile impressum alteque defixum anime essentia, nectaris torrentes tum per sese tum per potentias sibi conterminas infundebat imprimis largissima manu mirifica bona, ita spargebat in potentiis rationalibus intellectu videlicet et voluntate, que faciunt hominem esse quod est, ut absque strepitu perfacili assensu deo subdebantur illumque spiritu venerando omnium pigmentorum odores divino numine evaporabant."

50 *Ibid.*, 32r: "...tamen ob vim passionis denigrantis intellectum, pervertentis consilium, raptantis voluntatem, mentem in obliquum trahunt, infinitisque ambagiosis erroribus morales implicant obvolvunt et rotant"; f. 32v: "Supersunt due antiquiores potentie: voluntas videlicet et intellectus, que neque in corpore neque in his que sunt corporis insunt,

the other passions and love are distinguished from both the other faculties on the one hand, and the intellect and the will are associated with one another and with love on the other hand. Thus, love is a therapeutic force in the soul—but it can also be effective in political life.⁵¹

Ficino seems to be less concerned with the physiological aspects of love while turning—mainly in the last sections of his commentary on Plato's *Symposium*—to three sources: Epicurean physics through Lucretius' poetical account; medieval medicine; and astrology.⁵² We do not find such a focus in Pisano who is using, as we have seen, some Empedoclean physics, and some aspects of Heraclitus' account of fire, which he found most probably in patristic sources.⁵³ Instead of astrology or medicine we do find in Pisano many biblical examples which are absent from Ficino's commentary.⁵⁴ While Pisano is presenting a kind of biblical Neoplatonism with John, Plato and David at the centre,⁵⁵ Ficino, on the other hand, presents a rather detailed account of Neoplatonic metaphysics and its various epistemological and ontological

verum obsit prestantissimam nobilitatem extra sortem in ipsa anime essentia suas locavere sedes, soliumque regale stabilire; his nanque potentiis castus, merus, et legitimus amor adgeneratur, et sepenumero ullo absque carnis et sanguinis usu se gaudet, se fruitur, et sese, per sese, in sese ineffabili quadam suavitudine spirat effunditque." Compare Ficino's account of *vis incorporea* and his conclusions that *anima erit homo* and *homo solus est animus*, in *De amore*, pp. 69–73.

51 *Ibid.*, f. 44r: "Tristitias absorbet, amaritudines in mel mutat, turbida serenat, lachrimas quoque dulcissimis lachrimis ipse abstergit, ipse quietus, blandus, benignus, delitiosus, et puerili quadam mollitie et virginali applausu omnibus blanditur"; "...hostiles frenatus, principum furores, tyrannorum rabiem vel delinit vel mitigat vel tollit vel patiendo vincit quia impavidus, audax, strenuus fortis omnibus instat."

52 Marsilio Ficino, *De amore*, pp. 223–237.

53 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, ff. 96v–97r.

54 *Ibid.*, e.g., ff. 51r, 86v–87r, 117v–118v.

55 *Ibid.*, f. 154v: "Causam quidam exemplarem omnia contuentur quia omnia que Deus operatur dicente Iohanne quod factum est in ipso vita erat. Eternas causas quas magnus Plato ἰδέας nominatur haud ex alio in aliud labiles exemplare eternum fixum imitantur. In Deum quoque veluti in causam finalem omnia reduci dicente David omnia ad te spectant, nulla ambiguitas esse potest quia qui per se omnia ad se omnia fecit. Verumenimvero cum eadem operativa virtus una sit patris et filii et spiritus sancti sicuti eadem essentia necessarium plane est quod id quod Deus in nobis operatur sicuti a causa efficiente sit a patre et filio et spiritu sancto, et omnes effectus patrem, filium et spiritum contueantur." We notice the tension between a deterministic view where 'God is acting in us', and a free-willing agent who can decide to act otherwise and can still make authentic free choices. Thus, for instance, on f. 156r we find that "...pater quoque et filius in nobis inhabitet, nosque versa vice in illis quoque habitemus." On this point see also n. 72 below.

levels of existence and consciousness. The soul is regarded as an active principle which affects the highest and lowest components in this Neoplatonic structure.⁵⁶ Ficino is deeply inspired by Platonic and Neoplatonic metaphorical rhetoric which lends a further humanist flavour to his discussion. Here he is going beyond his essential role in the reception, through his translations and interpretations, of Plato and parts of the Platonic tradition, by using humanistic practices of philology and historical critique of sources.⁵⁷ Pisano, on the other hand, is more economical in his use of Platonic rhetoric and prefers, as already mentioned, direct citations from some Greek poets and from the Platonic dialogues. An intriguing case, from which we can learn more about the differences between Pisano and Ficino, is found in their accounts of yet another known Platonic aspect of love: madness (*furor*).

Madness is a certain aspect of love, a mental state one can reach because of love. There are different kinds of madness, all of which function as a dynamic element through which the soul can ascend or descend: good madness will lead the soul upwards, while bad madness will lead the soul downwards. From a Neoplatonic (and Pythagorean) perspective the human soul, while being buried in the body, needs this dynamic element through which it will be able to ascend.⁵⁸ Ficino is following here Democritus and Plato in arguing that skill (*ars*) and learning (*studium*) are not enough to make one a great man; one needs yet another essential ingredient: divine madness (*divinus furor*).⁵⁹ According to Ficino there are four species of divine madness: amatory, poetic, mystical and prophetic. They correspond to four sources: Venus, the Muses, Dionysius and Apollo.⁶⁰ But there is also another kind of madness (*insania*) which causes anxiety and is attached to vulgar love. This madness

56 Marsilio Ficino, *De amore*, pp. 239–241.

57 A good account of this can be found in Hankins' *Plato in the Italian Renaissance*, vol. 1, pp. 267–359.

58 For some basic references to relevant Platonic dialogues such as *Ion*, *Symposium*, and *Phaedrus* (and to Leonardo Bruni's translation), and to other sources used by Ficino in his 1457 letter on the divine madness, see *Lettere I*, pp. 19–28; e.g., p. 22: "Quo fit ut iis que corporibus insunt quibusdam quasi simulacris in animum per sensus corporis haustus reminiscamur quodammodo rerum earum quas extra corporis carcerem constituti antea noveramus. Qua quidem recordatione exardescit animus alasque commovens iamiam a corporis contagione sordibusque sese paulatim emaculat divinoque furore prorsus afficitur." References to Platonic texts are provided in the editor's notes.

59 Marsilio Ficino, *Lettere I*, p. 20.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 28; Marsilio Ficino, *De amore*, p. 241. In both places Ficino uses the form *Dionysius* (a name of a man), while the context seem to suggest *Dionysus* (the name of the god).

has a negative effect on our soul and it drives man back to his bestial nature.⁶¹ Pisano, on the other hand, is much more cautious than Ficino in his account of madness attached to love, and, while still being inspired by the figure of Socrates as he was depicted by Plato, he sharply distinguishes sweet love (*dulcis amor*) from tormenting madness (*vexanus* [sic!] *furor*).⁶² Being less committed to every aspect of the Platonic metaphorical language, Pisano is able to provide his readers with a more realistic account of love as a mental state and the danger involved in madness, while Ficino regards amatory madness as most powerful and superior (*potentissimus et prestantissimus*), and as something which directs others to their end and connects us to God.⁶³

This last remark does not mean that Pisano's account of love is less 'philosophical' than Ficino's. Pisano's text reflects other philosophical interests which were part of the philosophical speculations current in the fifteenth century. Thus, for instance, Pisano presents a very interesting account of the relation between God and human beings. Although we may appear to be similar to God, he contends, nevertheless there are infinite mysteries and most concealed secrets which stand between man and God. This relation is then shown in a series of questions concerning images: whether all images would exist at once through God's supreme act or would one image absorb and cancel another image? Whether one image would absorb and cancel another image partly and partly leave it as it is? Whether one image super-infused on another would make it clearer, and they would constitute only one image, called by many names because of the variety of accidents and qualities? Whether separate images would join forces in the same manner, or each image in its own

61 Marsilio Ficino, *De amore*, p. 237.

62 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, f. 119v: "Perturbatio nanque vite talis amor talisque amicitia prorsus est si ita fit atque officiorum omnium inordinata confusio quod cum reperitur, reperitur enim in subfurentibus vexano amore, uti nostro Socrati placuisse a Platone accepimus, minime dulcis amor sed vexanus furor nuncupandus est." *Vexanus* is not the classical form and I could not find this spelling in any other source. *Vesanus* is the classical form. So far I have found the combination *vesanus* and *furor* only in Bede's *In Marci evangelium expositio* 3, 10. It is interesting that the corruption caused by the original sin is also described as *turbidi amores* on f. 69r. On f. 148r we have a positive account of *divina dementia* which is regarded as the first cause of movement: "Credendum plane est pietatis nostre doctoribus angelis aut cognitum spiritum sanctum per modum amoris quo Deus se ipsum amat procedere. Ob hoc nanque quod spiritus sanctus per modum amoris procedit et amorem vim quandam impulsivam motivam habere omnes sapientes et patiuntur et fatemur minime dubitavere illi movendi divinam dementia primam causam adscribere."

63 Marsilio Ficino, *De amore*, p. 245.

way?⁶⁴ One interesting implication is whether all these many names, words and terms we use really reflect different things with regard to the single act of divine super-infusion? The fact that Pisano is focusing here on images is yet another important feature which reflects his interest in the *humana conditio*.

While discussing the restoration of man after original sin Pisano points out that this restoration includes divine grace and illumination, but also that in our fallen soul there should be something to be illuminated.⁶⁵ So it seems that there is an essential correspondence here, in the process of restoring mankind from the corruption of original sin, between divine grace and illumination on the one hand, and the will and intellect on the other. The will and intellect are key instruments in this process of restoration. In the same way Pisano is not willing to leave out of his discussion the animal and natural virtues and consider only rational virtues, a fact which again reflects his view of the human person, his perception of human psychology and human rationality which include more elements than only some virtues which are regarded as 'rational'.⁶⁶ This seems to be a more moderate position than the Augustinian one regarding the total corruption of all human faculties. And so:

And one grace, together with these virtues (or faculties) and through these virtues and towards these virtues, I think, sets in order and regulates all other things within and without, and conducts them all with great care.⁶⁷

64 Lorenzo Pisano, *De amore*, f. 72v: "Scimus quoniam cum apparuerit similes ei erimus, verum inter hec cadunt infinita mysteria et infinite dei sapientie reconditissima secreta, id est: an omnes simul imagines actu suo supremo sint an alia aliam absorbeat delectque? an ex parte absorbeat delectque ex parte substinere sinat? an una super infusa alii illam clariorem reddat et una tantum sit pro varietate accidentis et qualitatis plurimis dicta nominibus? an singule sub una ratione cohoperentur an singulatim una queque per se?"

65 *Ibid.*, f. 73v: "Idcirco ab originali iustitia existenti anime essentia una spetialis virtus emanabat que voluntatem precipientem ceteris virtutibus et intellectum illuminantem ceteras potentias informabat illustrabatque, sic a gratia in anime essentia adgenerata ut par pari reparatio conrespondeat ruine arbitror caritatem informantem voluntatem et divinum quoddam lumen illustrantem intellectum emanare."

66 *Ibid.*, ff. 138v–139r: "Eadem quoque virtute et ratione, non solum virtutes rationales, sed etiam animales et naturales Christo ad nutum obsequebantur, de ceteris autem mortalibus secus utique est."

67 *Ibid.*, f. 73v: "Ac una gratia cum his virtutibus et per has virtutes et ad has virtutes reliqua cuncta intus et extra disponere moderarique arbitror soliteque cuncta agere." Compare this with the role of divine love in the analogy between a man whose mind was kindled by divine love and Adam, on f. 87r: "Cum adhec homo cui divinus amor mentem ignescit et medullas demolitur et omnia intus et incute in suas rapuerit vires, profecerit, maior

But what, then, is the relation between grace and all the virtues, potencies, and habits? Grace is older than charity, and because of this priority it is able to work together with charity and make its activity agreeable to God. It functions through the mediation of charity with other virtues and potencies and habits. The result of this attachment is that charity is described as the Form of the other virtues, since grace perfects our deeds through the mediation of charity.⁶⁸ *Caritas* is especially important and without it we could not perform morally worthy acts (*opera meritoria*).⁶⁹

The third operation of grace according to Pisano involves free choice which cooperates with grace; this suggests again a strong connection between the operations of grace and our actions.⁷⁰ After introducing the distinction between *gratia operans* and *gratia cohoperans*,⁷¹ the tension between determinism and free agency reaches its high point here, since it is God who is acting in us.⁷² The end of grace is then presented: to hold the form of Christ in a passive way so that we shall have His image, form and glory in the afterlife, and we shall enjoy forever His divinity.⁷³ And immediately after that we have a mention of the divine Plato, discussing a similar end:

impedio est patre Adam cum adhuc misellus in nonnullis sit tamen fortunator, illo fortior illo, infirmior illo, quoque utique et miserior est.” It seems that divine love can change the balance between this man and Adam: Adam can now be regarded as weaker and more miserable!

68 *Ibid.*, ff. 74r–74v: “Quamobrem gratia et antiquior est caritate perquam illam ita illi cohoperatur ut opus suum per quam gratum Deo sit et mediante caritate cum aliis virtutibus, potentiis, atque habitibus communicat inque illis agit. Ex hac namque communione caritas dicitur etiam forma aliarum virtutum, quia gratia mediante caritate perficit opera, etiam aliarum virtutum meritoria deoque grata esse.”

69 *Ibid.*, f. 74v.

70 *Ibid.*, f. 75r: “Tertium, sine qua opera non perficiuntur nostrum quod ipsum liberum arbitrium est quod illi annuit et cum illa (illa cum *cod.*) cohoperatur.”

71 *Ibid.*, f. 75v.

72 *Ibid.*: “. . . qua gratia preparat hominis voluntatem ut bonum velit cohoperat quoque adiuvatque ne inaniter velit. Cohoperando itaque Deus in nobis pervenit quod operando inceptavit; ergo Deus in nobis operatur et cohoperat quamobrem divinos homines divinitus edoctos necessitas ipsa coegit ad graviter pervenanda memoria opera gratiam operantem et cohoperantem ponere.” The phrase *Deus in nobis sine nobis operatur* is usually part of the discussion of the infused virtues. It is discussed, e.g., in Antoninus’ *Summa theologiae*, vol. 4, p. 3. Antoninus is to some extent following here Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae, q. 55, a. 4. See the discussion of this issue in Chapter Four, nn. 85–88 and context.

73 *Ibid.*: “Finis gratie est hic habere formam Christi passibilis, ut in alia vita eius imaginem, formam, et gloriam habeamus, eiusque divinitate eternum fruamur.”

A similar end [was described by] the divine Plato, the most brilliant philosopher under the sun since the beginning of mankind, although in my opinion he ignored the means leading to it, nonetheless through these words it is manifest that Plato posited the end as "being similar to God" (Thtt. 176a9–b1), and virtue being sufficient for the good and happy life.⁷⁴

Let us return to the concept of love. Pisano is mapping the conceptual relations between the terms *amicitia*, *amor*, *dilectio*, and *caritas*, all reflecting different aspects of love, for the sake of the younger (*adolescentiores*) participants in the discussion.⁷⁵ Focusing on the first three terms, we can see that according to Pisano *amor* is superior from God's perspective, since it is through *amor* that divine grace is infused in us.⁷⁶ It is the other way round from our own perspective inasmuch as love is conceded to us by grace, and through grace love is inflamed, since love is the fruit of grace.⁷⁷ And what about *amicitia*? It is regarded as a natural habit which drives, agitate and moves every man to have social contacts with others; thanks to *amicitia* man creates friendly relations with other human beings.⁷⁸ The authority mentioned here by Pisano is Plato.⁷⁹ What about *dilectio*? It seem to add something important to *amor*: election or choice, meditation, and counsel.⁸⁰ This is indeed a very important

74 *Ibid.*: "Similem finem divinus homo Plato quo post natos homines noster sol clariorem philosophum nunquam illustravit; licet mea de mente media ignoraverit, dumtaxat his verbis posuisse apparet finem esse similem Deo fieri et virtutem sufficere ad bene beateque vivendum."

75 *Ibid.*, ff. 76r–v: "... volo illos [adolescentiores] scire amicitiam, amorem, dilectionem, caritatem quinque priscos patres amorum magistros ab invicem secrevisse, quinque quod nos sepenumero olim factitavimus nulla se lectione habita in communi illis usos fuisse."

76 *Ibid.*, f. 76v: "Ex parte Dei minime dubium amorem plurimum faciendum qua gratiam precedit et per illum nobis gratia infunditur."

77 *Ibid.*: "Ex parte enim nostra e contrario res se habet quam primo gratia conceditur et per gratiam amor inspiratur, amor enim fructus gratie utique est."

78 *Ibid.*: "Amicitia enim naturalis quidam habitus est qui impellit, sollicitat, movet unumquemque hominem factis ac dictis ad alterum, per quam decenter se habere et invicem eos benivolentia conciliat."

79 *Ibid.*: "Qua quod Platoni placuit omnis homo omni homini naturali quadam amicitia amicus est..." The formula *omnis homo naturaliter familiaris sit, et amicus omni homini*, can be found in Thomas Aquinas' *In decem libros ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nicomachum expositio*, 8, 1 (1541). See also Thomas' *Summa contra gentiles*, 3, 117. In Plato's *Lysis* 214b2–5, the writings of the most wise are mentioned, where it is said that a similar thing would necessarily always be a friend to a similar thing, in nature and in everything else.

80 *Ibid.*: "Dilectio etiam haud parum amori addit qua non solum agit naturali impetu sed electione, meditatione, consilio in amatis incedit, et nostra ratione et gratia innixa amatis feliciter utitur."

element which once again shows how love is an essential ingredient in moral psychology.

While distinguishing between the will (*voluntas*), to will (*velle*) and charity (*caritas*), Pisano, following previous authorities (mainly Augustine), emphasizes the principle of freedom in the will; to will, on the other hand, is some inclination of the will towards a universal goodness. Charity is a movement of the soul towards the delight in God and in others through God.⁸¹ Love is defined here as an ardent will which is well-disposed to the good, and through some ardent transformation it becomes affection towards a beloved object.⁸² Pisano is explicitly referring to Augustine in this context, where the action of love is described as a combination of power and virtue (*vis et virtus*).⁸³

The strong attachment between love and will moved Pisano to mention the two kind of movements related to the will: the internal movement, where the will is in charge of all the other faculties in our soul, and the external movement, where the will is in charge of external operations, driving man towards everything which pleases it.⁸⁴ This account of the will's movement provoked—once again—a keen defender of the will, since it seems that the internal

81 *Ibid.*, f. 77v: "Impresentiarum in paucis concinne quid voluntas, quid velle, quidve caritas sit accipite ut liceat ad maiora exploranda properare. Voluntatem esse maiores mei asseverarunt animi motum cogente nullo ad aliquod [Augustine, *Retractationum libri duo*, 1, 15] non admittendum vel adipiscendum. Unde velle nil aliud est quam inclinatio quedam voluntatis in obiectum ad universale bonum. Itaque his precognitis unus ex precipuis a maioribus tuis bone Iesu caritatem dixit animi motu ad fruendum Deo per ipsum et se ac proximo propter Deum."

82 *Ibid.*: "Possumus forte nec imperite nos sancire amorem nihil aliud esse quam vehementem et bene ordinatam voluntatem in bonum et quandam per vehementem transformationem affectum in rem amatam."

83 *Ibid.*: "Atque verum profecto dixit [*divus Augustinus*, mentioned just above] sed frigide nimium qua velocius moventur spiritus amore atque corpora pondere [Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, 11, 28] qua pondus tantum virtute propria corpus premit deseritque, amor autem non solum spiritus rapit vi propria sed vi et virtute amati cui in una actione coniungitur que advertens divinus Paulus amorum magister inquit [Philippians 4, 13]: omnia possum in eo qui me confortat."

84 *Ibid.*, f. 78r: "Voluntas de sui natura duos habet motus: unum intus ad res in anima permanentes prout imperat, ordinat, movetque potentias reliquas; alterum vero prout motat illas sensus quoque ad externas operationes et ad omnia que sibi placita sunt totum hominem agitat." Thomas Aquinas gets close enough to mention two internal movements: one towards oneself, and another towards another person. The first is again divided into two: will towards things one should do and intention towards the end; see *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae, q. 108, a. 3. This is not exactly what Pisano describes here.

movement of the will implies that this faculty is somewhat passive.⁸⁵ This lively account should also be understood as a parody of some Scotist philosophers who were too obsessed with defending the status of the will whenever they felt it was not treated properly. Pisano is again taking a more moderate position in comparison with Scotus and some of his followers, according to which the will is dependent on the Holy Spirit.⁸⁶ In the same manner he is not proposing any sharp dichotomy between the activity of the intellect and the activity of the will, but he rather uses the phrase *intellectualis amor* to break any such dichotomy.⁸⁷ And so, love is the truly supreme power through which the intellect is illuminated and the will is well-disposed towards God.⁸⁸ This

85 *Ibid.*, ff. 78v–79r: “Aderat in corona vir sophista, ore garrulo, animo vasto, corpore iactabundo, ut est genus illud hominum qui ut audiunt voluntatem se habere mere passive inceptavit constrepere et gyris et aculeis dyaleticis conabatur hominis ingenium prestigii illudere dicens: quomodo heus †tu da† potest voluntas se habere passive que sola libera est et reliquis imperitat. Summissim noster renidens oculis tamen subterius hominem prospectans qua colluctari garrire inaniter declinabat responsum minime dedit apage tantum suave inquit dumque obcepi perficiam inde si placebit lacessito movere voluntatem supra naturam sua<m> nulla creatura vim habet, solus Deus qui potest et agit in voluntate potest illam motare et circa hec mere passive voluntas mea de sententia se tener<e>.” A more serious consideration of this problem can be found later in the dialogue, on f. 145v: “Itaque cum natura humana solum in virtute patiendi esset capax ascendendi usque ad unionem divinitatis; deus nec immemor sue munificentie cum prius larga manu infinita bona impartitus foret, in plenitudine temporis secundum archanum aeterni consilii se ipsum concessit.”

86 *Ibid.*, f. 80v: “Verum enim vero aliqua ex parte equalitatem duplici de causa cum ipso spirito sancto voluntas servat, cum quia tota virtute sua se ad illum et cum illo movet tum qua in virtute superiori agit.”

87 *Ibid.*, ff. 80v–81r: “Primus noster est qua intellectus qui est oculus anime et naturaliter delectatur luce que est eius forma illam sequitur et simplicissimo quodam intellectuali amore illam [lucem] diligit, quia absque ulla voluntati operatione in se habet, quo fruatur.” This is followed by praises of this intellectual light, with strong Neoplatonic flavour; see f. 81r: “Ad hec in illa luce videt cuncta reliqua esse meras nugas fugientes, somnium umbras et tenebras, si ab hac luce illa disiungat qua et Deus quoddam omnium rerum illam per virtutem spiritus voluntati preponit amandam, quam voluntas totis virtutibus complectitur et in eius amplexus novo amore dilatatur.”

88 *Ibid.*, f. 81r: “Ultimus amor est quin intellectus illuminatus et voluntas ordinata in Deum una secundum Deum conveniunt . . .” See also f. 148v: “Amor semper scientiae conrespondet quia nil amatum nisi cognitum . . .”

can work also the other way round: well-disposed natural and divine loves emanate from the intellect and the will.⁸⁹

5 Conclusion

The phrase *amor intellectualis* reflects Pisano's position as a compromise between the extreme Scotistic view regarding the superiority of the will, and the extreme intellectualist view regarding the superiority of the intellect. Both positions are present in Pisano's dialogue, which should be regarded also as a window through which we can have a closer look at some of the debated theories in the scholastic and humanist circles in Florence in the mid-fifteenth century. The same phrase receives a completely different meaning in Spinoza's metaphysics, where there is no meaning at all to the distinction between the intellect and the will. But in order to understand better the novelty of Spinoza's view (and in fact the whole new seventeenth-century 'scientific' approach to human psychology) a detailed account of moral psychology in Renaissance thought might be crucial.

I hope that I have managed to provide some further and new evidence for the importance of the scholastic philosophy of Renaissance Italy, and have shown that in the hands of thinkers like Pisano, scholasticism is a dynamic and rather open philosophical tradition which is constantly changing and developing, influencing and being influenced by different intellectual trends and fashions. Whether we like it or not, self-styled Florentine 'scholastics' of the circle of Pisano are also part of the intellectual heritage of the Renaissance, and our historical understanding of this crucial period ought to exude a greater generosity towards the place and importance of those philosophers and theologians in our study of the debates of the time. The case of Lorenzo Pisano's account of love clearly shows that it is now time to bring back Florentine scholastics from the cold.

89 *Ibid.*, f. 82r: "Quod clarius pareat quin omnes ordinati amores, tam divini atque naturales, ab intellectu et voluntate emanare videntur opere esse pretium duco de ipso intellectu et voluntate frugi et castigata oratione pauca prius confabulari."

Conclusion

A New Renaissance Anthropology?

At the centre of this book stands a new Renaissance man, and this individual is not exactly the same 'Renaissance man' as he is usually depicted in most scholarly accounts and in the more popular images of the Renaissance. The kind of Renaissance man who emerges from the historical analyses presented in this book is a new phenomenon in Renaissance historiography: a scholastic thinker who is part of the rich medieval heritage on the one hand, but who, at the same time, is playing a leading role in a new intellectual culture which is emerging around him, one who displays a great awareness of, and a surprising familiarity with, novel ideas and methods, an openness and a curiosity. This man is not a traditional narrow-minded and limited intellectual who is struggling as much as he can in the name of some empty authority against every new intellectual or scientific innovation, nor is he as yet the 'modern' individual of the Enlightenment who, in Kant's famous words, emerges from his self-imposed nonage. Rather he is an actor in the historical scene beside some better known figures, the humanists, who were chosen by the 'standard' historiography of the period as the 'true', and on many occasions the sole, representatives of the 'Renaissance spirit'. This choice reflects in some cases (either implicitly or explicitly) assumptions concerning individuality and subjectivity, originality, progress, rationality and secularization, as being the defining features of the Renaissance. In this manner a stark contrast has been created with medieval culture which represents—again in most such 'standard' historiographies—exactly the opposite values: lack of individual, subjective and original elements combined with deep, dark and irrational religious sentiments. But the simple historical truth is that both Renaissance scholastics and Renaissance humanists are equally remote from Kant's ideal. At the same time they are equally on their way towards modernity. Such a realization behoves us to regard the terms 'scholastic' and 'humanist' in a much more flexible and dynamic fashion instead of the monolithic way in which those terms are usually understood. Given the huge importance of both 'humanism' and 'scholasticism' as the two dominant intellectual currents in early modern Europe and in the creation of modernity itself (through some constitutive events such as the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation and the Scientific Revolution), a more historically nuanced understanding of these terms might have some fecundity.

Seen in this way, this book is not part of micro-history, aiming at shedding more light on some overlooked individuals. From a strictly historical perspective the individual thinkers who are at the centre of this book were also at the centre of fifteenth-century Florence. Thus, the purpose of the analyses and detailed discussions offered here is to balance a biased historiographical picture and improve our understanding of 'the Renaissance'. It aims at showing some of the peculiar views and theories of these scholastic thinkers in the field of moral psychology together with their important encounters with some humanists who were their friends and colleagues, and who in some cases shared the same concerns.

It is my conviction that Renaissance scholarship has reached a point where we should let the historical phenomena 'speak' much more for themselves, thereby shedding the bondage of needlessly constraining historiographical categories and classifications. Thinkers such as Pisano, Salviati or Caroli on the one hand, and Donati, Ficino or Pico on the other, seem to elude established categories and dichotomies. In this regard we are in need of a new key which will allow us to enter more deeply into the heart of the intellectual history of the *Quattrocento*. For a useful characterization of such a 'key' we need look no farther than Pico's words in his letter to Galgano da Siena, who apologized for his 'unpolished' (i.e., scholastic) style:

For the only duty and purpose of the philosopher is to 'open' the truth. And I do not care much how it should be opened, whether you should use a wooden key or a golden key. It is far better to open it with a wooden key than to shut it with a golden key.¹

My hope is that this book is one such wooden key.

¹ Verde, *Lo studio fiorentino (la vita universitaria)*, vol. 2, p. 988: "Unum enim munus propositumque philosophi est: aperire veritatem. Illa, modo aperiatur, sive ligneam admoveas clavem, sive auream; haud multum curo; praestat omnino aperire lignea quam aurea occludere." The image of a wooden and a golden key comes from Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* 4, 11, 26, where the tension between eloquence and Christian teaching is discussed. But we do not have in Augustine any reference to the philosopher.

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